

# Disability Now

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LEON MORRIS

## GOOD NIGHT?

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## Job quota fails—review imminent

There is now official confirmation that the three per cent employment quota for disabled people has failed. In fact less than 30 per cent of companies with over 20 staff are sticking to the quota, compared with 53 per cent in 1965.

"It is no longer working," said a Department of Employment spokesman, "partly because disabled people are failing to register." The number has fallen by over 500,000 since 1980.

A review of government policy is due "reasonably imminently" to look at ways greater provision can be made for the employment needs of special groups, including disabled people.

Meanwhile, a new White Paper on employment and training, published in December, made no mention of disabled people.

David Simmonds, head of the NCVO's employment department, calls this "a disgrace".

"It was a disastrous mistake," he said, "when around 19 per

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## Demand for benefits review now

The Government's own independent watchdog, the Social Security Advisory Committee, says benefits for disabled people are complex and inadequate and calls for a single, integrated non-means-tested disablement allowance.

In its report, *Benefits for Disabled People: a Strategy for Change*, published at the end of November, the committee recognises that replacing the present piecemeal system with a single, integrated allowance paid as of right to all disabled people can only be done in stages and that it will cost money.

But it states: "The completion of the OPCS survey gives a very rare opportunity for thorough reform of the system. The opportunity must be taken and we believe that this unavoidably means putting in some new resources."

The report lays out four guiding principles that policy makers can use to reform the benefit system:

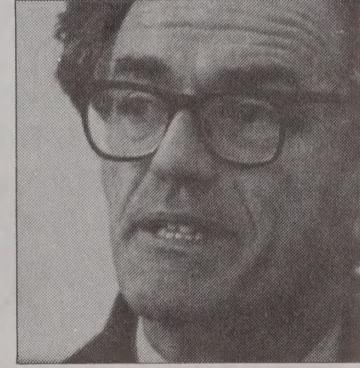
- ★ an adequate basic income for all disabled people who cannot support themselves fully, with parity of income between all groups
- ★ help towards the extra costs which people incur because of their disabilities, based on their particular disability
- ★ incentives for disabled people to achieve independence through

employment

★ rules on benefit entitlement that are easy to understand, ready access to social security offices and a minimum of delay and inconvenience in getting help.

In the wake of this report and the two OPCS reports showing that there are twice the number of disabled people previously estimated and three-quarters of them rely on benefits, the umbrella group Disability Alliance has challenged the Government to make a commitment to review the disability benefits system.

continued on page 2



Townsend: "national shame."

## £200 million share-out

About 2.6 million pensioners, many of them disabled, are to share in a £200 million hand-out from the Government.

For people on income support who are either over 75 or disabled and over 60, the extra money will come automatically from next October, increasing their income support by up to £2.50 a week for single people or £3.50 for a couple.

The Government estimates that 1.5 million pensioners, who just fail to qualify for income support, will also get extra help with their rent, rates or poll tax through the housing benefit scheme. They are to be reached by a publicity campaign.

The announcement, by Social Security Secretary John Moore on 24 November, came hard on the heels of an apparent gaffe by Chancellor Nigel Lawson.

At an unattributable briefing, he led journalists to believe that the Government was thinking of means testing more pensioners' benefits. Later he said he had been signalling an extra benefit for the poorest pensioners.

"We will not means test the basic state pension," confirmed Mr Moore during the debate on the Queen's Speech. "We will continue to protect it against erosion from inflation."

## Discrimination in Rye?

The future of a tea room in Rye, Sussex run by mentally handicapped staff will be decided this month.

Rother District Council is again considering whether to grant a licence allowing The Mariners Hotel to change from a registered hotel to a registered care home.

The first application was rejected after opposition by Rye Trade Council and the Rye & District Hotel and Caterers Association.

The owners of the hotel, the Canterbury Oast Trust, decided to go ahead anyway. The tea rooms have been open illegally since July, doing good business, and run entirely by eleven mentally handicapped people, aged 18-46. Six live on the premises and the rest share a house in the town.

Objections to the first application were that only local disabled people should go into local homes and that the town would be losing hotel space.

Joe Graham of the Canterbury Oast Trust rejects both reasons. "The principle at stake is quite clear. They are saying if you are a disabled person living in the UK you are not allowed freedom of movement - no court would tolerate this.

"The second reason is even more absurd. Ninety-five per cent of Rye's tourists are daytrippers. Before we bought it, the hotel had been sold twice in two years because the owners couldn't make a go of it."

Petitions and letters of support have been sent to the district council and Rye Trade Council has dropped its opposition to the second application. If it fails, the Trust will appeal.



**Being Neighbour-ly** in South London, Anne Charleston, better known as Madge in the popular soap, was at Greenmead Primary School for physically disabled children last month to launch a new charity, Friends of Greenmead, whose first aim is to raise money for a £250,000 hydrotherapy pool. Here she is with her cousin Rebecca Butler aged six, who has cp and is a pupil.

## Law on accessible taxis

New taxis which are inaccessible for wheelchairs are to become illegal, Michael Portillo (Minister of State for the Department of Transport) announced in December.

As from 1 February 1989, no new inaccessible vehicles can be licensed in London, and from 1 January 2000 this will apply to all London taxis.

The new ruling will affect about 427 taxis in the coming year, bringing the total available for disabled people to over 1,100 by the end of 1989.

By the end of the century it is estimated that there will be 15,000 accessible taxis.

"This is a marvellous Christmas present for all disabled

people," said RADAR's assistant director Bert Massie. He has tried out both the Metrocab and London Taxis International's FX4, (the traditional black cab).

"Some cab drivers will need persuading and training before they use these adaptations," commented a cabbie. "There could be insurance complications from having ramps sticking out in the middle of the road."

But Bert Massie argued that the new ramps will be simpler and safer. "They will help disabled people get into the habit of movement and travel," he said.

Local authorities in cities such as Glasgow and Manchester are following suit and ordering accessible taxis.

### Quota failure

*continued from page 1*

cent of the priority group - those who have been unemployed for two years or more - are disabled. Unless there is special provision for this group then the scheme can never succeed."

The new measures leave greater responsibility for job training in the hands of employers, and give them £3 billion to do it.

David Simmonds fears that control by local employers will increase the discrimination commonly experienced by disabled people in the job market. "Special groups' needs will be sidelined unless hefty requirements are placed on TECs (Training and Enterprise Councils) to cater for them," he said.

### Share your problems by phone

If you want advice on a personal or spiritual problem, why not talk to Lin Berwick, *Disability Now's* telephone counsellor, who is disabled herself?

Lin is at the end of the line on Monday afternoons from 1pm to 5pm, and on Thursdays from 6pm to 10pm.

Her telephone number is Hornchurch (04024) 77582.

## Work centres' new code

Work centres run by groups affiliated to The Spastics Society are being offered a new Code of Practice which, if adopted, will raise standards and give disabled users a better deal.

The Code is the follow-up to a report by a working party in 1987. It found that many of the 19 work centres around the country were in a very poor state as regards buildings and finances, but worst of all the life imposed on disabled users was "a sort of web of benevolent paternalism from which there was no escape".

The Code, which is voluntary and backed by the Society's Executive Council, gives local groups the tools to improve their service to disabled people.

Its overall objective is to increase opportunities for disabled users to develop a range of skills leading to greater independence. There are also twelve specific objectives, a suggested 3-5 year plan and sources of support and information.

"Be guided by one short, sharp thought", says the chairman of the working party, Betty Fisher. "Would you like it?"

The Code says that services should be determined by the needs of users and users should be involved with managing the

centres.

Other objectives include ongoing assessment of a user; a programme of "positive training" for management, users and staff; a choice between work and other activities; users to have responsibility for their own lives; advocacy schemes; managers to be allowed to manage in accordance with agreed policies; standard pay for staff; a clearly defined contract between the centre and the sponsoring authority; and a long-term plan.

The Spastics Society has promised to help local groups achieve these recommendations. Its development officers will report progress to the Executive Council.

Bill Hargreaves, ex-chairman of the working party, thinks the new Code lacks teeth. "There is no system whereby minimum standards are laid down and monitored", he says. "Standards will inevitably vary from place to place."

But he hopes that the appointment of a new head of inspection and quality assurance by the Society might help.

*Copies of the Code from David Hanson, Regional Services Manager, Daresbury Hall, Daresbury, Warrington, Cheshire.*

## Grand prix carer from Derby

Joyce Lambert, mother of a boy with brittle bones and foster parent to another with cp, won this year's Grand Prix Carer Award at a ceremony in London in December.

Mrs Lambert, from Derby, acts as a home help to numerous



**Mrs Lambert receives her trophy from BBC presenter, Stuart Hall.**

local elderly people, and often takes other disabled children on day trips, to relieve their parents.

Recent developments in her area have made life easier, such as new multi-screen cinemas, with wheelchair access. "Graham went to the pictures for the first time in his life," she said.

"She is a lively and cheerful character who gives her time relentlessly," said the nominating letter of a friend.

Altogether nine carers received awards in categories including mentally and physically disabled carer, residential home carer and care home trainee of the year. The awards are organised by PEN Marketing with sponsors led by Gable House Retirement Homes.

three and four years ago."

Minister for the Disabled, Nicholas Scott, speaking last month, said he acknowledged the impatience of disabled people and shared some of it, but added: "We cannot rush ahead".

He rejected allegations that the Government was holding up publication of the OPCS reports. "We have never held one back for a moment," he said. Publication was in line with the HMSO's timetable. It was a matter of waiting for the OPCS data to be translated into reports, he said.

★ The Disablement Income Group has challenged the second OPCS report which says extra costs incurred by people because of the disability average £6.10 per week. DIG's survey shows extra costs of £65.94 - ten times the Government's figure.

*Benefits for Disabled People: a Strategy for Change. HMSO £5.90.*

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A British Product shown in the Design Centre London.

# Arthritis care gets low priority

Arthritis causes most physical disability and a quarter of the adult population will have arthritis at some time, says a new report produced by a committee of the Royal College of Physicians.

Yet one in eight health districts in England do not have a single consultant rheumatologist and the situation is worse in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Local GPs are untrained in specialised care, and there is a dearth of physiotherapists, and hand and spine surgeons.

Waiting lists, and distances to clinics, are too long, says the report. "The degree of disability and dependency may increase considerably, sometimes irreversibly," if help is not given speedily.

Services vary from region to region, says the report, which calls for widespread improvements.

Twenty nine health districts lack a local rheumatologist, and in 54 districts there is at most one third of the adequate level of care.

Staffing ratios should be higher to cope with additional mobility needs, and access should be better thought-out.

*District Rheumatology Services, appeared in The British Journal of Rheumatology 1988.*

# Listen to disabled people, says Prince

The Prince of Wales has highlighted the lack of consultation between local authorities and their disabled consumers and the lack of coordination between agencies who supply services to them.

He was speaking at the official launch of a report published by his Advisory Group on Disability, which revealed the piecemeal and idiosyncratic nature of support services for people with severe physical disabilities living in the community (see *DN* November).

He hoped the point about consultation would be picked up by readers in local authorities and health authorities.

"It is listening to disabled people, even those who are less confident and less articulate, that is the way that real needs will ultimately be met," he said.

He admitted that it was always difficult to get people to work together, but insisted that "a way must be found to ensure that this happens more successfully in the future."

He suggested that someone in each region should have the job of bringing people together. "A lot depends on who does the coordination," he said.

The Prince met 25 of the 200 disabled people who had contributed to the report. He heard of the obstacles they had overcome to win their independence and the frustrations they still face.

"Today has brought home to me what the title *Living Options*



**The Prince of Wales meets Cathal O'Philbin from Bognor Regis, a contributor to the report.**

LESLEY HOWLING

*Lottery* actually means," he said. "Too much, it seems, depends on where you live and when and how your disability arose."

Suitable housing was, he thought, "essential" and he was glad that his advisory group had made headway in encouraging house builders to make new housing accessible at ground level.

He mentioned voluntary organisations such as John Grooms, the Cheshire Foundation and The Spastics Society who were finding ways to give disabled people in residential care more

control over their lives, and he found examples of good practice in the report "useful and enlightening".

"I hope very much that the inspiration of those gathered here will impress on society at large the need for services that offer disabled people a lifestyle to meet their needs in everyday life," he said.

Disabled people were impressed by the Prince's interest and concern. "He really seems to care," said Anne Milnes from Milton Keynes.

"The report says a lot about

# Uncomfortable report, says Minister

The Social Security Department has sent a note urging local authorities and health authorities to produce a coordinated plan for service delivery to disabled people, announced Minister for the Disabled Nicholas Scott at the Prince of Wales' reception.

Representatives of the Government and the Kings Fund (who both funded the report) have met to discuss plans for promoting it, he said.

"I think it is not a particularly comfortable report for those involved in the provision of services", said the Minister. He thought it was "vitally important" to provide more standard services, improve coordination and consult disabled consumers.

"We are counting on you absolutely", said Bill Buchanan, chairman of the Prince of Wales' Advisory Group on Disability.

what disabled people have known for many years and we are very grateful that these things have been highlighted," said Richard Wood, chairman of the British Council of Organisations of Disabled People.

But he believed BCODP members had the knowledge and expertise to produce such a report themselves.

"While we are funded the way we are (£5,000 from the Government this year) others will continue to do things on our behalf," he said.

# Bradford centre fights closure

Centrepoin, the teleshopping and home delivery service used by over 1000 disabled and elderly people in Bradford, was axed by the local council in November.

It was claimed that, since the Manpower Services Commission has been disbanded, insufficient funds are available. Then, on 13 December, a petition was handed to the council, and a Centrepoin representative was allowed to make a speech.

This was greeted by a standing ovation, and members of both Tory and Labour parties have promised a review.

Councillors had been quoted as saying there would be no reprieve. But popular outrage from both able-bodied and disabled communities means the service, which employed a number of disabled people, may live again.

# Computer discount

IBM computers have announced a massive 40 per cent discount for disabled people on their Personal System/2 models.

Individuals and organisations can apply for the discount.

Information and assistance from the IBM Centre for People with Disabilities (FREEPHONE 0800 269545). Launched in October, the centre will be operational by January.

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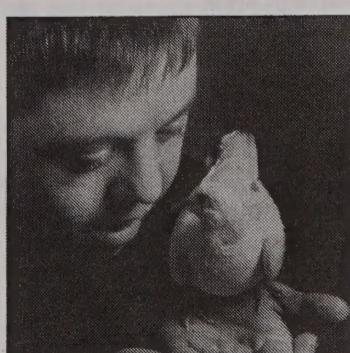
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MICHAEL WILLIAMS

# Anger over new GLAD head

Greater London Association for Disabled People (GLAD) has had to fend off angry demonstrators after appointing a new director in November.

The new head, Neale Huggins, came in for swift criticism for being "able-bodied". Protesters gathered at GLAD's South London Headquarters and signed a petition against the appointment.

"It's been a horrible misunderstanding," said a GLAD spokesperson, "we are convinced

that Mr Huggins has an ongoing experience and understanding of disability."

"I was assaulted when I was a bus conductor, which led to four years of severe mental illness," said Huggins. "I still suffer considerable physical pain."

"I don't feel there should be degrees of disability, because the most important thing is to fight people's perceptions of stigma and stereotype."

Mr Huggins takes up his job this month.





## IN PARLIAMENT

### HOUSE OF COMMONS

#### Busy time for Commons

The Queen's Speech on 22 November introduced thirteen Bills.

The Water Bill, seeking to privatise the ten water authorities in England and Wales, is probably the most contentious of all the Government's privatisation measures.

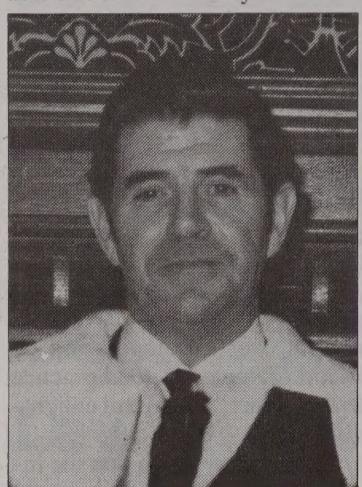
One consequence could be the metering of water supplies and increased prices. The Spastics Society has said that if this happens people with disabilities on low incomes should receive extra help.

The Social Security Bill includes clauses to tighten up the rules for claiming unemployment benefit by shifting the emphasis from being available for employment to actively seeking it. A test

will be introduced to discourage people from depending on unemployment benefits when they could be working.

The Bill also includes the recently trailed announcements about extending the age limit on Mobility Allowance from 75 to 80.

Other Bills include an Employment Bill to remove the restrictions on the employment of women and young people, an Electricity Bill to privatise distribution companies and the Children Bill to change the way in which local authorities assist children to leave care. In the past authorities had a "duty" to assist



Lord Carter

them, now they only have a "power".

In a debate on the 24 November, Jack Ashley (Lab) described the absence of any direct reference to disabled people in the Queen's Speech and as "an absolute disgrace".

Referring to the recent Office of Population Censuses and Surveys reports revealing there are now 6 million disabled people in Great Britain, he said "it is inexcusable for the Government to neglect the relative decline in disabled people's living standards".

### HOUSE OF LORDS

#### Silence on Griffiths report

On 7 December, Lord Carter (Lab) drew attention to the inadequate level of assistance available to people with mental illness or mental handicap moving from residential care into the community. His motion received support from all sides of the House in a debate lasting two and a half hours.

In his opening speech, Lord Carter criticised the Government for closing hospitals and other institutions without making

simultaneous arrangements for community care.

While the Griffiths report had produced a range of proposals for organising community care, he said the Government's response has been "a deafening silence".

Lord Mottistone (Con) said that hospitals for the mentally ill had been reduced more quickly than the growth in provision of community care.

Lord McClusky (Indep) said it was a tragedy that the Government would not find the money to spend on community mental health.

Lord Ennals (Lab) asked why the Government had not yet responded to the Griffiths report which had been published in February, and when would it be replying?

The Government's spokesman on Health and Social Security, the Earl of Arran, replied, "I cannot say with absolute assurance".

Summing up the debate, Lord Carter said he was disappointed by the Government's continued use of phrases such as "in due course" and "an on-going debate" in its reply to the Griffiths report and the provision of community care.

Kate Nash

## Women twice as prone to disability

Women are almost twice as likely to have serious disabilities as men, claims a new report.

*Disabled People: Their Needs and Priorities*, by Richard Silburn, director of the Benefits Research Unit at Nottingham University, lists disabilities affecting the joints as the principle cause for women, with men suffering more traumatic injuries such as motor accidents.

The report, based on a survey of 124 disabled people in North Derbyshire in 1986, finds that

they need information, counselling, housing, equipment, personal help, transport and access.

The most frequent comments made were about improving access in public transport and shops, providing more and better physiotherapy and better bathroom adaptations.

*Disabled People: Their Needs and Priorities*, by Richard Silburn, available from Chris Isaacs at the Benefits Research Unit, University Park, Nottingham, £4.00.

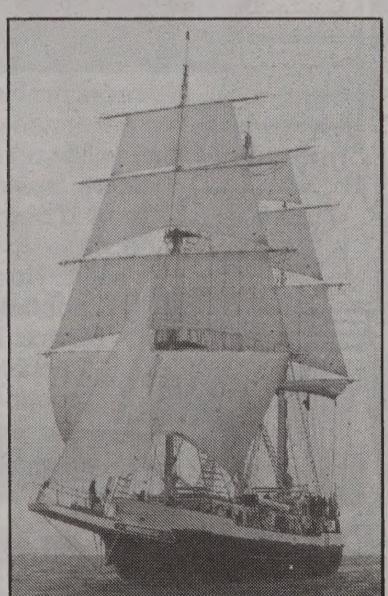


Linda Harris, 25, has just moved into one of 20 self-contained flats for physically disabled people in Norwich, built by the John Grooms Association. Linda, seen here with her niece, has CP and has never lived away from home before. "It's a bit nerve-wracking but very exciting," she says. Residents will stay for up to two years to prepare them for living independently in the community.

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The two dictaphone portable recorders on special offer to *DN* readers last month were wrongly priced.

The 1243 minicassette which records for 30 minutes and comes with battery, cassette and carrying case is just £68.31, (list price £99).

The 3242 microcassette, which records up to two hours on one cassette and has other refinements, costs £135.41.

To order, cut out this offer and send with a cheque, or postal order, payable to Dictaphone, to Eddie Rivera, Dictaphone, Alperton House, Bridgewater Road, Wembley, Middx HA9 1EH, tel: 01-903 1477.

#### Special bus

Sainsbury's, the supermarket chain, is funding a bus exclusively for people with disabilities. It is responding to pressure from Camden Council, London that a new supermarket in the borough should be accessible to all local people.

The company has put up £125,000 over 5 years for the service which will be run by Camden Dial-a-Ride, starting early in 1989. Fares will be similar to public transport.

The service will run Mondays to Fridays, from different parts of the borough on different days. Details from Camden Dial-a-Ride, 25 Leighton Road, London NW5 2QD, tel: 01-267 2993.

## IN BRIEF

#### Efamol on prescription

The popular brand of evening primrose oil, Efamol, thought to be good for a variety of conditions including arthritis, diabetes and PMT, is now available on prescription for the treatment of allergic eczema.

After clinical trials, the DHSS has granted a product licence. This means it has been found to be safe and effective in treating this type of eczema which mainly affects children. Its brand name on prescription is Epogam.

#### Cash cuts NHS queues

Six health authorities are to get a total of £250,000 to help cut hospital waiting lists.

David Mellor, Minister of State for Health, said the money was the final allocation from this year's £30 million Waiting List Fund.

It means 340 people waiting for operations from hip replacements to by-pass surgery will get treatment. This includes 10 children in Salford waiting for treatment for curvature of the spine.

#### Free facts on incontinence

Incare Helpline, a freephone service to help people with the problems of incontinence, has published a set of five fact sheets answering their most common queries from men and women.

To use the helpline, phone (0800) 521377 and to get the fact sheets write to Freepost, Incare Helpline, InCare Medical Products, 43 Castle Street, Reading RG1 7SN.

#### Tranquilliser helpline

A new telephone helpline for people who are dependent on tranquillisers has been set up as part of an initiative by the BBC's *Daytime Live* programme. It is running a series of features on the subject until May.

The helpline has been given a £70,000 grant by the Department of Health and is available every Tuesday from 1-6pm. The number is 0345 500 800. Calls will cost the same as a local call and will be treated in confidence.

#### Suffolk success

Suffolk County Council, based in Ipswich, have pledged that any disabled person applying for a job will be guaranteed an interview.

It is part of the council's new policy for disabled people and so far the council says it has been successful.

#### Less hot air

Two leaflets by British Gas outlining their services for disabled and elderly customers have won first prize in the open category of the Plain English Awards.

The award is to promote clarity and comprehensibility in official documents.

British Gas beat thousands of other entries for their leaflets which were clearly written in large print.

## UK housing provision beats Europe

A new generation of disabled people are vociferously speaking out for their rights, says Bill Hargreaves, a UK delegate at the International Conference on Disability in West Germany in November.

Seventy delegates from seven European countries met for a week to discuss attitudes among disabled people and staff, and how to challenge professional arrogance and affirm the rights of disabled people to normal lifestyles.

"Surprisingly, the UK is head and shoulders above most of Europe in its provisions for disabled people, especially in housing," said Bill Hargreaves. "The Spastics Society, for example, has been going since 1952, and people with CP can be seen in the streets. This is impossible in many European countries."

The conference resolved that innovations and ideas from different countries need to be re-interpreted into other cultures, and that information must be spread more widely.



**Billy Benham, victorious captain of the Northamptonshire team competing in the 1988 English Disabled Sports Team Championship in Coventry. They took away the cup, a bottle of champagne to put in it, and a £500 cheque to buy some more.**

MARTIN MANSELL

## Ignore elderly and disabled people at your peril, conference told

Disabled and elderly people now form a significant market force, which designers and manufacturers should ignore at their peril, according to speakers at the conference, Automating the Home, in London in December.

Nigel Appleton of the Anchor Housing Trust explained how the elderly sector is expanding, with those over 55 accounting for around 40 per cent of the country's wealth.

Elizabeth Fanshawe, director of the Disabled Living Foundation, argued that besides improving the quality of life for disabled people, better designed products would lead to increased sales, and everyone will be happy.

"It would be a designer's dream to have standard disabled people, all with the same disability and all wanting to do the same

## Victory reception for cp athletes



**Norman Burns (left), CP team captain, and his nephew, Michael Walker, who took 4 golds and broke 4 world records in club, discus, javelin and shot. Swimmer Jane Stidover, holding her photograph, won 2 golds and 3 silvers and was the first woman in class 4 to complete 100m breaststroke in under 2 minutes.**



**Winners all! Standing (from left) Stephen Syndercombe, London; Paul Williams, Nottingham; Gerard McConnell, Glasgow; Roy Scotland, Edinburgh; Colin Keay, Kirkaldy; Brian Clarke and his mother, Smethwick. Sitting (from left) Dean Thomas, Llanelli; Carol Johnson, Berwick-upon-Tweed; and Peter Pearse, London.**



**Douglas Shapland with sprinter Brian Clarke from Birmingham, who beat his personal best in the 400m at his first international.**

### Beryl Leaver reports

Seasoned international athletes and successful newcomers to disabled sport came to London's Tara Hotel on 11 December to be honoured by The Spastics Society, which had sponsored them to represent Britain in the Paralympics in Seoul.

At the reception, Douglas Shapland, the Society's chairman, spoke of the marvellous achievement of the athletes with CP.

They returned with 45 medals out of the 179 won by the British squad, which put them top of CP groups from more than 60 countries, and contributed to the UK's third place overall.

Guests at the reception included vice-chairmen Derek Ashcroft and Valerie Lang, and Ian McBain, director of the Scottish Council for Spastics who,

like some of the athletes and their parents, had travelled a long distance.

Television actress Elizabeth Counsell, a member of SOS, and Carol Myer, SOS director, were also there to watch the athletes

receive mementoes of their participation in the ninth Paralympics: a framed photograph of the 28 team members and support staff taken in the Paralympic village.

Some of the Society's staff who had given particular support also received the photo, including director of regions Ann Hithersay, manager of CP sports Howard Bailey, and Bob Fisher and Anne Thorning.



**Ian McBain, Scottish Council, (right) with Doug Shapland.**

to combat the problem, they recently launched a Careless Parking Campaign with the police and the local council, leaving leaflets on offending cars, saying "Careless Driving Can Cost Lives".

The leaflet also advises them on how to avoid causing a hazard.

Careless car parkers are to be challenged in a new initiative from Kingston Upon Thames Association for Disabled People.

Blocking ramp-ways or dropped kerbs can force disabled people to cross roads into oncoming traffic, or maroon them waiting in roads for drivers to return to their vehicles, claim the

In a wheelchair herself, she has experienced many design triumphs and nightmares affecting disabled people's lives. "Wheelchair users are mainly handicapped by the wheelchair itself," she pointed out.

She then listed various objects which would benefit from better design. Food packaging: "takes two strong hands and a set of strong teeth to undo." Petrol pumps: "obviously not designed with the female hand in mind."

Fire doors: "only the super fit can struggle through them." Bras: "why do they do up at the back, requiring a complicated set of movements?"

Merle Davies, with her own experience of disability, thought Elizabeth Fanshawe had made

some very good points, "for example, suggesting that a bath that was easier to get in and out of would negate the need for a hoist."

She agreed with Nigel Appleton that retaining independence in old age depends on retaining independence "as we age."

Sadly, the exhibition which accompanied the conference did not seem to have considered the needs of disabled people. It had only a handful of stands – half of which displayed expensive hi-fi systems.

"There wasn't really anything I would find useful," said Merle Davies, "except a video entryphone, which would give me much better security." Chubb Locks produce one model, costing roughly £1500. (Phone Bob Duggan, 01-247 4321).

## Helping Disabled People Break Free.

To help disabled people break free, please send a donation to: Winged Fellowship, Angel House, Pentonville Road, London N1 (01) 833 2594.

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# Letters to the Editor

Disability Now, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ

## Whose fault?

With reference to the letter from Ron Stacey (DN October), I must point out that having been appointed Motability Consultant for a main Ford dealership here in Lancashire where we have a higher than average population of disabled people, my first task was to contact every group and association in this area asking for comments, suggestions, even complaints, about the services offered by garages so that I could offer what people wanted and avoid the pitfalls which would be highlighted.

I sent the letters in May and to date have not received any replies, not even the complaints I had expected.

Having tried to offer what was wanted, I have been forced to offer what I think is wanted. I am sure you will understand that I will be disappointed if someone now tells me I was wrong!

Please, if someone does take the trouble to ask what you want then do answer their letter, otherwise they won't ask again, and if they genuinely have failed to provide the right services – whose fault is it?

**Louise Hill**  
Motability Consultant  
Skipper of Burnley Ltd  
PO Box 35, Queens Park Garage  
Eastern Avenue  
Burnley  
Lancs

## DISWEB

The European Conference for Women with Disabilities described in the November issue *Disability Now* was the third such meeting, albeit the first Ms Glasman attended.

Last year the participants formed a network for co-operation and exchanges of information called DISWEB.

At their meeting in Holland last September the participants agreed on a team of 4 women from Denmark, Holland, Norway and West Germany, who will now prepare the next activity for June 1989.

We should be happy to provide disabled women with further information and put them in contact with the organisers.

**Verena Aigner**  
Mobility International  
228 Borough High Street  
London SE1 1JX

## Sense of responsibility

Marjorie Phillips (DN October), maintains that manufacturers of aids for disabled people "know they have a captive source of income," and that "their sole interest is to maximise profits for themselves and their shareholders".

For many years, my company, Stannah Lifts, has been supplying disabled users with a range of domestic lifts.

From our own experience, I can assure you that we do have a sense of responsibility towards our clients. Our earnings are ploughed back into the company to improve quality, increase efficiency, and provide more employment. This, in turn, enables our pricing policy to ensure that the resultant savings are passed on to our customers.

We also try to put something back into the community and society.

Stannah Lifts has a continuing commitment to sponsorship.

Projects we have funded include the popular booklet *Providing for Disabled Visitors*, RADAR 10th Anniversary News, Newham Access Guidance Notes, the DIAL Consortium, Riding for the Disabled and Help the Aged Radio Division.

We support education through the Stannah Travel Fellowship and participate in the Technical and Vocational Educational Initiative.

As manufacturers, we may be subject to commercial pressures, but ruthless exploitation of a "captive" market is not our business.

**B L R Stannah**  
Director  
Stannah Lifts Ltd  
Andover, Hants

## Inaccuracies

I am writing to correct some inaccuracies in your report on the RNID Fair Hearing Campaign (DN December).

Firstly, the delays faced by people referred by their local GP to a hospital ENT consultant for investigation of a hearing problem are caused, not by staff shortages as your report states, but by sheer weight of demand.

ENT consultants are specialists in a very broad range of conditions, not just hearing loss; many of their referrals are young children; obviously precedence is given to priority cases. Unfortunately people with a "routine" hearing loss are not considered a priority and can indeed, in some areas, wait up to two years for an appointment.

Secondly, your report's final paragraph implies that the RNID is proposing that health visitors and district nurses take over the dispensing of hearing aids in the new community clinics. This is also slightly wide of the mark.

What we in fact suggest is that health visitors and district nurses may be among a very broad band of professionals interested in

training and working as Community Dispensers.

The important point is that we believe the job of Community Dispenser will attract many more people than the current hospital-based PMT (Audiology) post, because it offers more flexibility and more autonomy as well as the opportunity to work part-time.

Finally, to say that we are campaigning for the Hearing Aid Council "to be allowed to discipline private dispensers" is too simplistic.

We believe the HAC is hampered in disciplining dispensers who contravene its code of practice by the severity of the single penalty it has available to it; to strike the dispenser off the register.

We are seeking to amend the Hearing Aid Council Act so that the HAC has a wider range of lesser penalties, such as fines, with which to regulate the private dispensing profession.

**John Healey**  
Head of Campaigns  
Royal National Institute for the Deaf  
London WC1

## New Year's resolution

May I address a plea to anyone who has cerebral palsy, and who would like to contribute to the government of The Spastics Society?

**MAKE IT YOUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION TO STAND FOR ELECTION TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.**

Get into training now!

Have you got committee experience? Try to gain all you can. If you can't join, go as an observer.

Go to as many of our regional conferences as you can – you need to be known up and down the country.

At this year's AGM I spoke on the importance of people with cerebral palsy being represented

on the Executive Council in equal numbers with parents, and with those who bring other skills, but who have no direct experience of cp.

This is probably a controversial view, but at this stage in the Society's development, I would argue that all three of these groups can contribute usefully. (There are times in a family's life when the parents of a cp child are clients, with their child.) We may wish to have people with cerebral palsy in the majority one day, but for now let us aim at getting a better balance.

At the moment those of us with cp are outnumbered 2 to 1 by parents and, while "some of my best friends" are parents, we need more disabled people standing in the next election.

If you want more advice on how to start, or a copy of my AGM speech, please write to me.

**Valerie Lang**  
Vice Chairman  
Flat 1, 28 Lofting Road  
Barnsbury, London N1 1ET

## DN's new look

I would just like to say that I am a reader of *Disability Now* and it is very good. It has a lot of information for disabled people. I have cp and I find it very interesting.

I am on a low income, but for now I would like to send you the £6 individual subscription.

**Denise Clare**  
Northwich, Cheshire

I am rather saddened to learn that you feel it necessary to smarten the appearance of this publication and to use thicker paper.

One of the appeals of *Disability Now* was that it was simple and direct, and our concern for trees should also have a high priority.

**R J Simpson** Manager  
Work Centre for Handicapped Persons, Hillingdon

dragged off semi-naked and charged with offensive behaviour, but released on bail. Could this set a precedent for the next demo at Elephant and Castle?

## Married bliss?

This Government has often hinted that it believes marriage to be the natural state for grown adults to exist in. One reason for introducing the Severe Disablement Allowance four years ago was apparently to remove financial discrimination against disabled wives. Unlike men or single women, they were forced to take a medical to see if they were "fit for housework" before they qualified for benefit. The Disability Alliance claims that the 240,000 married women excluded under the old "normal household duties" rule remain discriminated against. Of the 57,000 claims for SDA since it came into effect, 63 per cent of claims by men succeeded, as did 68 per cent by single women. And married women? 45 per cent. They were twice as likely to undergo medical assessment. Discrimination by any other name?

**Julian Marshall**

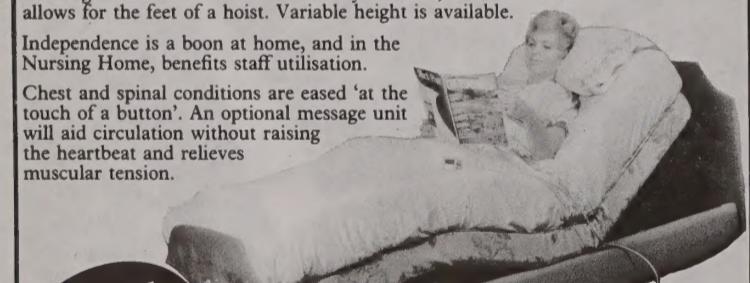
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## Final say

Now that the fuss about the Seoul Paralympics has died down, perhaps the last word should go to the South Korean disabled demonstrators who have accused their government of hypocrisy. "We say that they should be spending the money on helping disabled people here before staging such a propaganda coup", said Mr Kim Hyong Sang, a member of the welfare committee of the National Organisation for Handicapped Persons. Critics of the Government claim that out of an estimated one million disabled people, only 12,000 receive state assistance.

## Midas touch

All credit to Midas car service specialists, who are concerned that not enough publicity has been given to the VAT zero-rating on adapted cars, and to their repairs and spare parts. "As a group the disabled are too often neglected or ill-provided for", says Midas' managing director,

Paul McIntyre. It's a shame to have to report that this well-meaning company seems to serve its disabled customers from behind something the size of the Berlin Wall: (see pic).



## Down under protest

Australian disability rights activist Martin Stewart and his new wife Helen certainly know how to keep their demonstrations to the point. Protesting that disabled people are capable of "normal" sexual relations, the Melbourne couple attempted to make love in front of 300 cheering spectators (well, it was on Bondi Beach). After ignoring police warnings, they were

Four months since the Community Programme ended and Employment Training began, it is now clear disabled people are losing out on services even though their job prospects are brighter.

Out of £42 million spent under the CP providing work experience to unemployed people working with disabled people, around £31 million is at risk – a reduction of 74 per cent.

This is one of the preliminary estimates of a national survey by the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) into the effect of the introduction of ET.

The full report, out this month, will show that while large organisations are managing to switch to ET, the end of CP is hitting smaller social care organisations hard.

Under the old CP scheme, young people provided various support services – from transport for housebound people to advice for people with mental health problems.

Employment Training, on the other hand, emphasises individual training rather than service provision. To get funding, organisations taking on unemployed people have to guarantee a structured training course.

The NCVO does not disagree with the changes and recognises the importance of more training. But it is calling on the Government to take account of the consequences.

"It is not necessarily true that the voluntary sector is losing large sums of money," says John Mabbott, NCVO development officer, "but existing projects are losing money and that is going to have a very real impact on the kinds of provision made for people with disabilities."



Derek Milner – "utterly disillusioned."

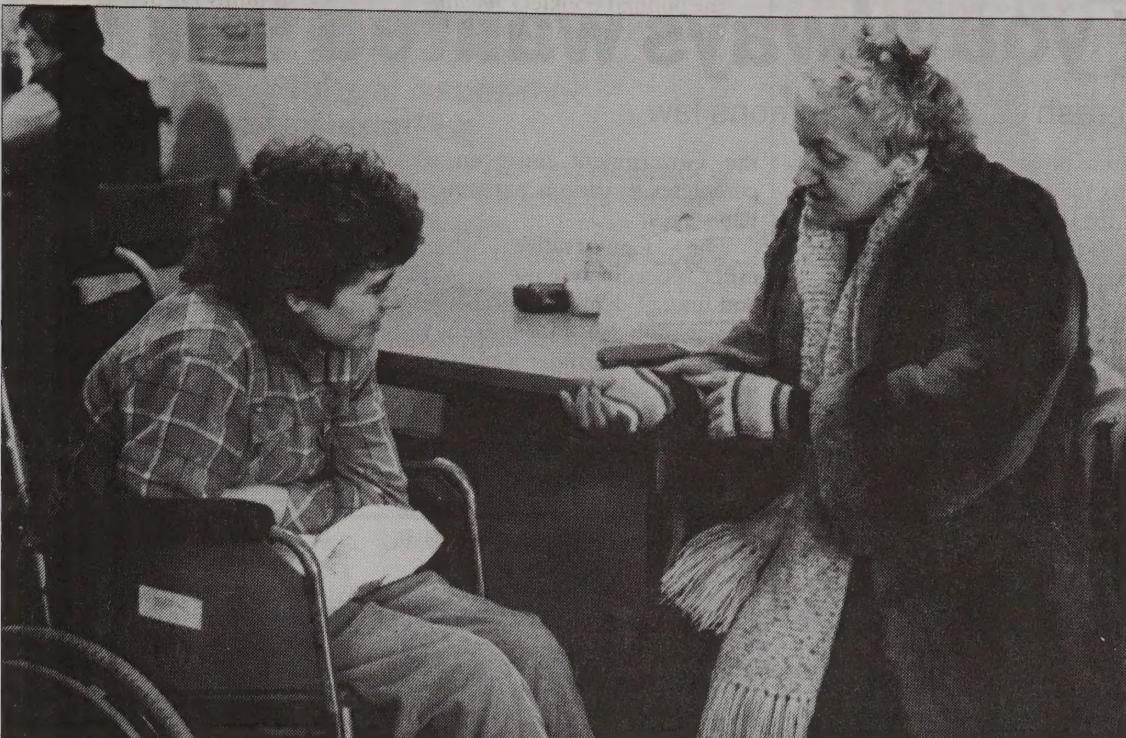
The Temple Row Centre in Keighley, West Yorkshire, for example, which has 800 disabled members, organises activities for an average of 70 people daily. Its management committee is mainly composed of people with disabilities.

The centre received £150,000 government funding over four years under the CP.

But in the change over to ET it lost £72,000 funding for salaries and 22 out of 24 workers. Bradford Council has given it £7,500, but this will only last until April.

"Come April we are going to have very real worries," says Ken Powley, co-ordinator at Temple Row. From 700 letters he has sent to industry and private companies asking for funding, he has received one donation, of £250.

"Companies are getting 2,000 applications a week from voluntary organisations," he claims. "One managing director rang to ask what was going on. His



Chatting in Temple Row Centre – it lost £72,000 funding and 22 workers changing to ET.

## After the Community Programme – what next?

Geraldine Holden finds vital services which must not be lost

company makes large donations to Conservative party funds but he said perhaps they should put the money into the community."

The Disabled Advice Bureau in Bury St Edmunds has had to close down altogether. Over 2,000 people used the service in its two years of operation.

Advice worker Derek Milner, who has multiple sclerosis, says the Bureau had most successes with mobility and attendance allowance. "We filled a gap between what disabled people can do themselves and what the statutory agencies can do."

This often meant visiting housebound people to tell them the benefits they could claim.

The Bureau did not fit into ET as the advice workers under the CP received no formal training. According to Derek Milner, they used books and commonsense. He is "utterly disheartened and disillusioned" by the closure.

Another small but valuable service was a CP project providing special seating for wheelchair users, run from the Dundee Limb Fitting Centre.

Margaret Hannan, rehabilitation engineer, said: "It would be impossible for us to move over to ET because we wouldn't know how long people would be with us and you cannot provide a service on that basis."

The end of the CP has not meant the end of the service – yet. Ms Hannan is reasonably hopeful that Tayside Health Board will fund four people part-time on seating.

The picture is also uncertain for workshops providing clothes for disabled people. Out of 28 nationwide, three have become charities and seven more have closed, four in Scotland.

The rest are pessimistic about the future. A workshop in Rotherham switched to ET – they have 20 training vacancies but so far only one trainee.

Ginny Jenkins, clothing advisor at the Disabled Living Foundation, thinks the change

will make it much more difficult for people with disabilities, such as curvature of the spine, to get clothes they are happy with.

"The quality must vary. ET is not long enough to teach someone how to make specialised

**"Politicians and voluntary organisations should put pressure on the Government to pick up CP projects"**

clothes."

She thinks it is a positive step – workshops becoming charities. "People are saying 'we believe clothing for disabled people is a fundamental right and are looking at alternative fundings'.

"Although the present situation is disastrous, a healthier, stronger structure is emerging."

Local authority response to the problem has been patchy so far, according to the NCVO's survey. Some have picked up what services they can, others have provided temporary funds and others lack the will or finances to do anything.

If smaller projects are struggling, what is the situation for large charities changing roles from CP agencies to ET managers?

After a slow start, Age Concern found the uptake of ET increasing. Independent Age Concern charities merged under one umbrella when ET came in and this has helped them get funding.

John Smithson, ET division manager for Age Concern in England says a rule change has also helped – since 25 November any CP worker can become a trainee and have a full year's training. Before, any CP time was taken off ET. "There is no doubt in my mind we will retain a significant number of CP workers," he says.

Ann Hithersay, director of regions for The Spastics Society, stresses ET is not replacing CP; it is a training scheme to give unemployed people work

"But the most important issue is how do we replace or retain the valuable services that existed under CP and give people better work experience and so better job opportunities?"

She believes it is possible to do both if the training programme is properly structured and the number of training places increased. "The Government could have drawn service provision and training together if there had been more forethought."

The Society's Employment Training Manager, Robert Meadowcroft, adds: "Nineteen per cent of the long term unemployed are people with disabilities and we cannot turn our back on those people."

While he sees ET encouraging greater independence among both disabled and able-bodied people, he argues that the Government should announce a scheme to pick up some of the CP projects and politicians and voluntary organisations should put pressure on the Government.

Because of widespread concern about the end of CP, a meeting was held at the Home Office in October with representatives from various government departments, including social security and employment,

But according to Peter Little, chair of VONET (Voluntary Organisations Networking for Employment Training) and former assistant director (CP) at The Rathbone Society, although the Government is concerned if important services are being lost, no additional funding is available for the coming year.

However, one channel is still open. The Government wants to hear of specific and relevant examples of services under threat because of the end of CP.

If you know of any examples, send them to us at *Disability Now* and we will pass them on.

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# Everything you always wanted to know...

Brian Lamb continues his crash course in Commons law

How often have you heard an MP say "Today I have tabled a motion" or "Today I am introducing a bill to ..." and then waited for the outcome of their noble cause or the result of the debate?

Odds are that the MP was talking about either an early day motion or a ten minute rule bill.

The first stands little chance of being debated while the second will never find its way on to the

statute book. But both are useful ways for an MP to raise an issue in the face of a Parliamentary agenda that is dominated by the respective party managers.

#### Organising debates

The Government controls most of the time in the Commons.

A large part is taken up by legislation announced each autumn in the Queen's Speech, which

the Government must ensure completes its various parliamentary stages.

The Conservative whips' office coordinates the passage and time of debates and ensures that enough MPs are present to give the Government a majority when opposition amendments go to a vote.

Usually the Government and the whips' offices work harmo-

niously. But if there is controversial legislation or the opposition feels the Government has not consulted them properly or produced legislation too late for proper scrutiny, they can attempt to hold up business.

One way is to discuss or "talk" a Bill through the night, thus sacrificing the next day's business and putting pressure on Government time. This can even happen without the agreement of the opposition whips' office when

backbench MPs feel strongly enough.

The opposition is allotted so many days a year – at the moment seventeen for the Labour Party – when they can choose the subject for debate. The smaller parties get three days between them.

These days often give pressure groups an opportunity to raise points of concern.

#### Adjournment debates

These occur in the last half-hour of business each day and allow backbench MPs to raise issues, usually relating to their constituency or region.

The "motion" must be directed at the minister responsible and may not call directly for legislation. In practice, it covers a wide range of issues. The minister has to reply.

Unfortunately, if business continues into the night, an MP may be addressing an empty chamber at 2.30am with only the minister for company. Worst of all, journalists will not be listening in the press gallery.

#### Early day motions

Early day motions (EDMs) are tabled (ie put on the table) for debate if they have won the support of six backbench MPs.

They are mainly intended to illustrate parliamentary interest and support for a particular issue and can be used by pressure groups to stimulate a campaign.

Since an EDM can be mentioned during a debate or in question time, it is a way of bringing something to the attention of a minister, because civil servants will have to prepare a briefing in case the issue is raised.

An EDM was used effectively during the Health and Medicines Bill over the Government's intention to introduce charges for eye and dental tests.

Many conservative backbenchers signed the motion as a way of signalling their opposition to the Government, even though when it came to a vote some of them remained loyal.

Although the motion was never debated, it did allow dissenting MPs to put pressure on the Government. The whips were not unduly worried though. Most EDMs attract less than 100 signatures, and the Government has a majority of around 100.

#### Ten minute rule bill

MPs can also draw attention to an issue by introducing a ten minute rule bill. It is discussed immediately after question time on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Any MP can speak for ten minutes.

Occasionally the Government may think the issue is worth supporting and help it along. Around 15 acts have been passed in this way since 1945.

The main point is that it is a rare opportunity for a backbench MP to raise an issue while the House is well attended.

*Next month: why the chamber of the House can be almost deserted during a debate, yet MPs are still working.*

*Brian Lamb is The Spastics Society's lobbyist.*

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# What's in a name?

A lot, argues Anne Rae. Fancy names cloud the real issues that disabled and able-bodied people should be confronting

There is an ongoing argument within the disability movement around how we, disabled people/people with disabilities, should be referred to.

Some people with disabilities argue that we are people *first*, and that our disabilities (impairments) have nothing to do with who or what we are, or what we can or cannot do.

Others, who identify themselves as disabled people, argue that we are disabled more by environmental and economic barriers than by our physical/sensory impairments – and that the term disabled people allows full exploration of what we are disabled *by*.

This is a healthy debate because establishing the fundamental principles of disability issues is vital for understanding our position in society, and confronting it effectively.

What is not helpful is new, convoluted terminology for disability which can only cloud the issues.

But need them or not, new "right on" phrases for disability issues are being bandied about. They seem to be floating across the Atlantic from the USA.

Participation and integration for disabled Americans is much more of a reality than it is for us. There is an Anti-Discrimination Act for Americans with Disabili-

ties progressing through Congress now. Experimenting with language is a luxury they can, perhaps, afford.

Here is a glossary of phrases, with my comments.

**Physically Inconvenienced.** This trivialises the problems confronted by disabled people to the point of being quite offensive.

Those of us unable to move around our own homes, or out of them, are not *inconvenienced*: we are prisoners.

Those of us unable to use public transport or get into public buildings are discriminated against. Those of us denied access to full educational and training programmes are denied the right to knowledge and to further our intellectual potential. Those of us unable to work for all the contributory reasons above are living below the poverty line. We are not *inconvenienced* by being regarded as asexual: we suffer identity loss and the denial of sexual fulfillment.

**Physically Challenged.** This certainly has a good ring to it. It brings to mind all those heart-warming tales of derring do: of disabled people who climb mountains or are lionised for being literary geniuses in spite of their "severe disabilities".

Quite a lot of them go to Buck-

ingham Palace and get awards ... and are burdened by becoming role models.

Or is it the overwhelming majority of us, who struggle from day to day just to exist, who are burdened by having to live up to these role models?

Being physically challenged for able-bodied people and disabled people should be a matter of choice. The phrase smacks of failure for those of us not perceived as responding to "physical challenges".

Quentin Crisp (*The Naked Civil Servant*) once asked on *Wogan* "What's wrong with being a failure?" and nearly got a standing ovation.

**Differently Abled.** Well, isn't everybody? Able-bodied people often latch onto this phrase in their early attempts to understand our oppression.

Apart from its superficiality, it also feeds the myth that we are somehow compensated by Nature with extraordinary cheerfulness, courage, an extra "sense".

Disabled people who use it also contribute to this myth that we are "special people", with a special perspective on life which is more enlightened than that of able-bodied people.

Of course we often have a different perspective – our segregation from mainstream life



ensures that – but the conclusions we arrive at should be no different to those of able-bodied people, aware of the injustices heaped upon minority groups.

**Temporarily Able Bodied.** (TABS). This was introduced by Judy Heumann, founder of The World Institute on Disability.

In an interview for *Link* she observed, with great perspicacity that we are the only minority group to which *anybody* could belong, and she thought able-bodied people felt very threatened by that and, therefore, by us.

Why then should we use a phrase which will remind people that they can become what they most fear, if our very existence

does that already? It will do our cause no good.

Reminding planners, architects and policy makers that access for all is morally right and economic sense is one thing. Wagging our fingers metaphorically at people saying "Wait until you're disabled" is another; akin to "You wait until you grow up", etc.

Finger wagers are not endearing people, and I'm not entirely sure that able-bodied people who refer to themselves as TABS are either.

One thing is for sure, we're all "TAPS" – "Temporarily Alive People". But do we want to be reminded of this too often?

I bet there's somebody out there who will say yes.

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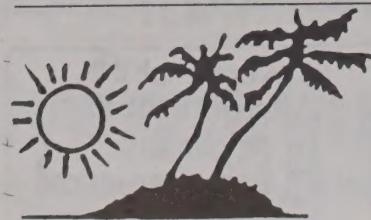
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I wanted my annual holiday to present me with a challenge – so what about flying for the first time? Friends had invited us to stay for a week at Auchterarder in Scotland. Here was my chance.

I was very apprehensive about it all, but I said to myself that Gatwick to Glasgow was only an hour and twenty minutes, so if I didn't like it, I would survive.

British Airways staff were extremely helpful and supportive, even when we booked.

Getting into the plane was easy. I was seated almost before I realised I was on board and had individual instruction about the safety procedure. The flight was amazingly smooth.

It was a cold rainy day in Glasgow, but the welcome was warm and friendly, and that was how it remained throughout our whole stay. I did wonder, though, if Scotland would be all lochs and heather and, being blind, I would get very little out of it.

We hired a car at the airport.

One of the first stops was Pitlochry, at a shop with good wheelchair access where they make every conceivable tartan,

## Castles, crystal and Gleneagles coffee

Lin Berwick gets the VIP treatment in Scotland

with jackets and lace blouses as well. I bought a length of material and a jacket. My husband treated me to the blouse!

From there we visited Dunkeld Cathedral. It has managed to retain intimacy and sanctity despite its programme of renovation. There are some beautiful views on the way.

The following day it rained with rain, so as Ralph and I collect Edinburgh crystal, we went to see how it was made. There was no problem with access. A tour takes about forty-five minutes and costs £1. But for our party of four, the fee was waved and I was given VIP service.

We all had to wear safety glasses which I found amusing as my eyes are artificial.

We were shown the whole process from glass blowing to marking and engraving and the tools they use. It was fascinating to feel such craftsmanship in the making. There was a restaurant and disability toilet.

The next day we had a taste of the high life – Gleneagles Hotel for morning coffee.

The greeting was very warm and friendly. The linkman had me up the steps and into the

spacious entrance hall within minutes.

You really get a sense of occasion: coffee and divine home-made biscuits are served with elegance and dignity.

Although I could not see the stunning views, I could smell the grass and the plants.



On the famous links: Lin with Helen and Sid Cook. RALPH BOYCE

In the afternoon we visited the waterfalls at Killin – a wonderful opportunity to hear the deafening roar of gallons of water cascading down.

The next day we visited a paper-weight factory at Creith. There were thousands of

beautifully patterned weights, but it was disappointing not to be able to see how they were made and no help was given to blind or disabled people. Prices were high in the restaurant – 70p for a coke.

A place where time seems to stand still is Scone Palace, a stately home that is still lived in. There is a large collection of furniture, porcelain, paper mache vases and very old leather Bibles on the ground floor; also a portrait gallery.

Officials rope off exhibits, which is unfortunate for blind people, but I was lucky to have the administrator give me a personal tour.

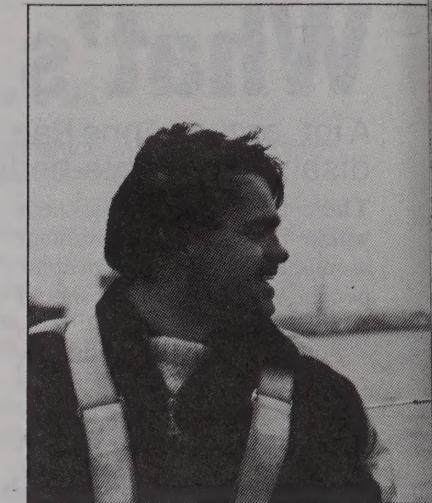
I sat at a dressing table used by Queen Victoria, opening drawers and compartments where she kept her jewels. There was also a beautiful bureau inlaid with brightly coloured wood with lots of little secret cupboards.

The high point of my holiday was a visit to the Quarry Mill Woodland Park, 27 acres of woodland opposite The Scottish Council for Spastics residential centre.

Emphasis has been put on ease of access for wheelchair users, blind or elderly people.

There are one-and-three-quarter miles of path with hand rails and another mile of paths for able-bodied walkers.

The park has twenty-five species of tree, with wild flowers,



Out on Southampton water: Kevin (I

grasses and mosses, birds and animals.

On our last full day we visited Sterling Castle. People displaying orange badges are allowed to drive up the steep slope to the castle entrance.

The building is splendid. You can get a sense of how strong a fortress it must have been.

At the National Trust shop a fifteen minute video tells the history of the castle.

All these outings plus pleasant meals in places made accessible by some very kind people added up to a memorable holiday.

Who said I wouldn't get anything out of it?

*British Airways, Gatwick to Glasgow return apex fare (minimum 2 weeks notice) cost us £71 each. Car hire for a week from the airport was £183 – less if you hire from a city office.*



Sterling Castle – a steep climb unless you have an orange badge.

BRITAIN ON V

## Choosing a holiday – alone or in a group

Bill Hargreaves explains a new scheme

Even the top tour operators get it wrong sometimes, but then so do holidaymakers. One side misunderstands the requirements of people with different disabilities, while the other does not understand that most holidays are organised for the average able-bodied person.

### THE NATIONAL TRUST WELCOMES DISABLED VISITORS

As well as its many accessible historic houses, castles, gardens, and beautiful stretches of coast and countryside the National Trust has several accessible holiday cottages – adapted for disabled guests, including wheelchair users. These are in Cornwall, the Lake District, the Isle of Wight, Northumberland and Yorkshire.

The Trust also has an Adventure area on the Pembrokeshire coast where groups of people – able-bodied and disabled – can bring expert tutors to learn many outdoor activities including abseiling in or out of wheelchairs!

For further details and a free copy of the Trust's annual facilities booklet please send a stamped (14p) addressed adhesive label to:

Valerie Wenham,  
Dept DN, The National Trust,  
36 Queen Anne's Gate,  
London SW1H 9AS.

Most major tour operators (and Thomson Holidays have a special department) will take note of needs and try to meet them. Useful information for individuals can also be obtained from the Holiday Care Service, and the Handicapped Aid Trust helps towards the cost of carers.

Many disabled people, however, thoroughly enjoy the group holidays organised by commercial companies. Saga, for example, offers group holidays for the over 60s, though they find it difficult to cater for those who need personal help. Other companies cater for special interest groups.

The Chalfont Line have specialised in transport and group holidays for disabled people since 1979.

They now run their own "care-share" holidays, where helpers are provided according to need at an all-inclusive price. This means much lower cost for the disabled person: there is no personal helper to pay for.

The system works. A survey I conducted of 23 disabled people who recently visited Valkenburg in Holland revealed that 16 found the help system "excellent" and two said it was "very good".

Because fully-accessible hotels can be very expensive, it has been found that by providing enough helpers parties can go to less expensive, less accessible hotels and still have a happy time.

Staff provided by the Chalfont Line push wheelchairs, help with bathing, cut up food and lend a hand generally. They even go on all the excursions (free on coaching holidays), so no one

need feel lonely or in difficulties.

So, if, like me, you stagger, or you need a wheelchair, or you have difficulty with eating, dressing or communication, or if you want security and the occasional helping hand, then group holidays may well be your right choice.

*Chalfont Line Holidays, 4 Medway Parade, Perivale, Middx UB6 8HA, tel: 01-997 3799. Thomson's Client Services Department, tel: 01-387 9697, ext 4242. Saga Holidays, Saga Buildings, Middelburg Square, Folkestone, Kent CT20 1AZ, freephone 0800 300400.*

*For Holiday Care Service and Handicapped Aid Trust, see page 12.*

*Bill Hargreaves is retained as a consultant by the Chalfont Line.*



The holiday spirit – good food and company – on a Chalfont Line trip to Singapore. Proprietor Terry Reynolds one of the party, sitting at the two o' position. He too shares the work of



captain Tom King.

PETER HOWLETT

# Master of the seas in a weekend

Kevin Holmes steers a 32ft yacht

One weekend last spring, three of us with cerebral palsy, plus the development officer of our local group, took part in an experiment: sailing for the disabled.

Tom King of Kings of Stratford has a 32ft cruising yacht and wanted to make it available for disabled people to cruise in the Solent and surrounding waters. (In fact, he's hoping to become a registered charity.)

The weekend fun began when we reached Ocean Village Marina at Southampton and made our way along the pontoons to the boat.

Nobody had told us that these pontoons move with the tide. The next thing I knew I was lying on my back looking up at the stars.

A little way ahead, the pontoons made a 90° left turn. Unfortunately, the person leading this intrepid band of explorers had very poor sight, and as the pontoon made its left turn, he didn't, walking straight off the edge into six feet of dark, cold, Southampton water, carefully taking with him his bags with all his fresh clothes for the weekend! Luckily he could swim and was rescued without anybody else getting too wet.

We spent the rest of the evening on board getting to know this fascinating environment, finding out which end was which and dodging the seemingly unending wet clothes.

We were hearing new words like "port" and "starboard", "astern" and "forward". They took on a strange new set of meanings when spoken by someone with a speech defect!

On the Saturday we got round to taking the boat out. Mr King – some would say frivolously – allowed us to steer. It was very enjoyable, if only the boat would stop tilting.

We sailed half way down Southampton water and back, at least five miles. We had conquered the seas.

The fact that we got back in one piece was partly due to Mr King's insistence on safety. Everybody had to wear life-jackets and have a safety cord connected to the boat. We also practised a rescue. There was no question of venturing out if the weather was anything like rough, so we felt safe and in experienced hands.

On the Sunday we went a little bit further down Southampton water and experienced our first



tacking manoeuvre (this is boating jargon for turning the boat round.)

All in all, it was a very enjoyable weekend – a new experience which gave us a feeling of freedom and movement.

It also gave the four of us a great feeling of camaraderie and a sense of achievement. This, perhaps, is the real benefit of "sailing for the disabled": it uses a boat as a way of achieving all kinds of skills that can be adapted for everyday living.

*The yacht can be hired, with a two-member crew, for holidays or training cruises, for one day, a weekend (from £95 per head) or longer, including visits to foreign ports. It is not wheelchair accessible. Brochure and charter rates from Kings of Stratford, Ocean Village Marina, Canute Road, Southampton SO1 1JJ, tel: (0305) 821961.*



gets to anything getatable – in this case the Colosseum in Rome – with a phrase book and a Project Phoenix access guide.

## Your first trip abroad

Freelance journalist Stephen Hunt offers advice for Latin lovers and Romeos

Feeling jaded and in need of pepping up? Then take a Continental City Break. For the first time traveller it will also be a useful introduction to holiday survival and enjoyment.

Rome is a typical destination. To start with you'll be offered either a scheduled or a charter flight. Gatwick at 6.30 am followed by two and a half hours in a bolt upright seat to Campino is not ideal, but a front seat and a cushion on the meal table to rest on helps.

The money you save on the flight can go towards a four-star hotel; it's closer to the city centre but that's all you can be sure of. The three entrance steps turn out easy enough but then the lift is too narrow for a wheelchair.

Time to involve the staff. No ground floor rooms? Then suggest a chair in the lift, or you can stand inside with your walking frame while your helper takes the wheelchair upstairs and they send you up when he's ready.

Of course, no problem, *prego!* Suggest this also qualifies you for breakfast by room service every morning.

While you're at it you might as well suggest they send up hot water as required: that'll be the tea-making taken care of. Hotel staff are generally obliging, provided you make known your requirements in a positive and friendly way.

In your room there are more surprises: the wheelchair won't get to the bathroom. Re-arrange the furniture; it's a well-known British custom anyway. Then it won't get around the lavatory to the washbasin. Use a wet flannel; just another British custom after all.

At last you're out in the street carrying, of course, your handy disabled phrase book, and your handy Project Phoenix access guide (except you're not accompanied by their team of trained athletes). Still, with your stalwart pusher and a pannier strap stretched between the footrests to stop your feet bouncing off, you're ready to get at everything that's getatable – St Peter's, the Vatican Museum, Villa Borghese, the Coliseum, all those lovely piazzas and pizzas.

If you sometimes need assistance don't be shy to ask for it; what you see and do depends as much on your determination as your inclination.

Rome can be expensive, crowded and scorchingly hot. Go at the end of October when all three are off-peak. Your four nights, including travel, bed and breakfast, will cost around £240 per person from Quo Vadis, through any travel agent.

*Disabled Travellers International phrase book, from 60 Greenhayes Avenue, Banstead, Surrey. Access Guide to Rome and Florence, Project Phoenix (address page 12).*

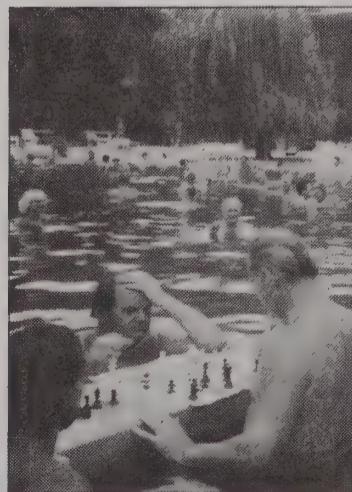
## Behind the Iron Curtain

Local government officer Peter Nicholson, who is deaf, strapped a rucksack to his back, thumbed through the time-tables, and set off.

Since I will be getting married to a deaf woman this year, I decided last summer to travel independently to somewhere my fiance wouldn't want to go. So I took a month-long under-26 Inter-rail card to Eastern Europe.

1 West Germany... I arrived in Cologne on my birthday, welcomed by pouring rain, but saw Kölner Football Club play Karlsruher (the league leaders) in the afternoon. It was the best match I'd seen for ages: Kölner won 6-1.

I'd been told to take toilet paper, because it's scarce in Eastern Europe, but at the football match a policeman



Keeping cool in Budapest.

searched my bag, took out my brand new roll of paper and threw it in the bin! I explained to him, but he just pointed to the W.C. and said "there's already a toilet in the football ground."

2 Czechoslovakia... The



Peter and a stunning view at Konopiste Castle in Bohemia.

eight-hour train trip to Prague was the worst I've known: I had to stand in a crowded corridor.

Once there I felt very strange, walking among the five-storey blocks. Prague seemed dull at first sight – there weren't many bright colours. However, I felt a bit wonderful to have just reached behind the Iron Curtain.

I spent two nights in a hotel and four nights in someone's back garden, recommended by the Tourist office. Prague is a lovely capital, and it was easy to take day-trips. One of the best was to Konopiste Castle in Bohemia, (see photo).

3 Hungary... After Czechoslovakia I arrived in Budapest, the Hungarian capital, and spent four nights in a very big campsite.

There was lots to do; it's a huge city, with good night life.

The most relaxing time I had was in one of Budapest's swimming pools. It has two outdoor mineral spring baths, an Olympic-size pool, and costs only 35 pence per day, including sauna. Old men play chess on special tables in the middle of the pool.

I took a train to Lake Balaton and walked around the countryside, but I felt very lonely, as the summer was over.

4 Romania... Brasov, in the centre of Romania, is surrounded by the Alps. The

train service is slow and crowded.

Romanians are very friendly, though sometimes it becomes tricky. For example, a student helped me find a church, and some other buildings, then asked me to exchange some pounds for Romanian currency.

It was an offer I couldn't refuse. In fact, I sold £60 for the equivalent of £220 in Romanian currency on the black market.

After Brasov I went to Constanta on the Black Sea, which has beautiful beaches. I met a deaf Romanian man there, who was extremely friendly.

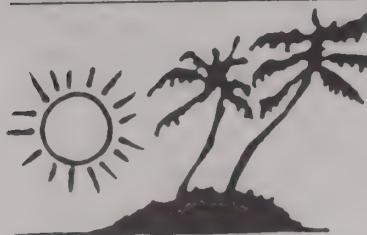
Romanians speak good English and are much more helpful than Czechs, who in turn are better than Hungarians.

Finally I went shopping in Bucharest, the capital of Romania – to get rid of all my money – but queues are long and shops are rare. Bucharest is a flat, untidy and unclean city.

My deafness didn't make any difference. I used signing to express what I meant to say, and lip reading.

Wheelchair users would find Budapest the easiest to visit. Romania would be terrible.

I was so relieved to get back home: it was excellent value for money, (the rail card cost £134 for a month), but I wouldn't fancy living in a communist country, even as an ambassador in the British Embassy.



## Voluntary Organisations

**Churchtown Farm Field Studies Centre, Lanlivery, Bodmin, Cornwall, tel: (0208) 872148.** Run by The Spastics Society. Field study and adventure courses for children and adults.

**The Disaway Trust, Roy & Francis Sheridan, 2 Charles Road, Merton Park, London SW19 3BD, tel: 01-543 3431.** Three holidays arranged for 1989: Rhodes in May, Scotland in June, and Minorca in September. Organise holidays and provide caring personnel, roughly 20 holidaymakers and 24 carers on each trip. Contact Roy or Francis Sheridan in January for further details, or to volunteer if able-bodied.

**John Grooms Association for the Disabled, 10 Gloucester Drive, Finsbury Park, London N4 2LP, tel: 01-802 7272.** Two hotels, in Somerset and North Wales, provide accommodation for wheelchair users and families. Plus 13 self-catering caravans, bungalows, a chalet and a holiday flat in London N4. Runs London visitors club, reserving reduced-price adapted rooms at the London Tara Hotel. **Kielder Adventure Centre, Low Cranecleugh, Kielder Water, Falstone, Hexham, Northumberland NE48 1BS, tel: (0660) 50232.** Part of the Calvert Trust, it runs outdoor and indoor programmes for people with special needs. Open mid-January to late November.

**PHAB (Physically Handicapped and Able-Bodied), Tavistock**

House North, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9HJ, tel: 01-388 1963. Organises holidays in Britain and overseas. Send 70p for 1989 brochure.

**Project Phoenix Trust** organises and runs study tours and interest holidays abroad for mixed physical ability groups of adults who may need a high level of personal care. Helpers are provided free. Write to Mrs V. Saunders, 68 Rochfords, Coffee Hall, Milton Keynes, MK6 5DJ, tel: (0908) 678038.

**Scout Holiday Homes Trust, Baden Powell House, Queen's Gate, London SW7 5JS, tel: 01-584 7030.** Fully furnished six-berth caravans and chalets for any family with a disabled member. Fully accessible, with excellent facilities. Eight locations in England, Wales and Scotland.



**'I get alick out of you!'—A happy customer on a John Grooms holiday is ready for anything.**

**Winged Fellowship, Angel House, Pentonville Road, London N1 9DX, tel: 01-833 2594.** Holidays for disabled people whose disabilities may be severe. Four holiday centres in Surrey, Essex, Nottingham, and (just opened) Southport. Holidays, special interest fortnights and overseas trips for small groups. Helpers provided, but more volunteers welcome.



**A deckful of basking beauties sail the deep blue yonder on a Disaway holiday.**

## Hotels

**Hotel Marjola, Etela-Saimaan Invalidit r.y., Kauppakatu 58-60, 53100 Lappeenranta, Finland, tel: 010 358 53 17430.** Offers full wheelchair access and facilities for deaf, blind, and asthmatic. Includes beachsauna with wheelchair path into the lake.

**Mar y Sol, Turisme y Construcciones S A, Los Cristianos, Tenerife, OR Lynne Diane James, 7 Overpool Road, Ellesmere Port, South Wirral L66 1JW, tel: 051 339 5316.** Purpose-built, totally wheelchair-accessible, with swimming-pools, sports and health facilities. Apartments for rent or ownership.

**Thornbury Hall Hotel, Lockwood Road, Kingsley Holt, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST10 2DH, tel: (0538) 757220.** Large old house has been adapted with needs of disabled people in mind.

## Specialist Companies

**Carefree Holidays, 64 Florence Road, Northampton NN1 4NA, tel: (0604) 34301/30382.** Holidays for retired and people with special needs in hotels and holiday centres. Easy access guaranteed. Wheelchairs provided free, but 20 per cent supplementary charge for helpers.

**Chalfont Line, 4 Medway Parade, Perivale, Middlesex UB6 8HA, tel: 01-997 3799.** Specialised coaches and tour managers provided for holidays to destinations including the UK, Spain, Switzerland, Holland, France and the US.

**Country Holidays, Spring Mill, Earby, Colne, Lancashire, BB8 6RN, tel: (0282) 445566.** 3,400 properties throughout England, Scotland and Wales, catering for all levels of disability. Disabled Person's Helpline open from 9.00am to 5.00pm on (0282) 445340.

**Threshold Travel, 80 Newry Street, Banbridge, Co. Down, BT32 3HA, tel: (0820) 626267.** Relocated from Manchester, company now run by Philip Wright, himself disabled. All

hotels visited by someone in a wheelchair. Custom made holidays—fly/drive with adapted car in the US; sailing in accessible cruiser.

## Boats

**Lyneal Wharf, Black Prince Holidays Ltd., Stoke Prior, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, B60 4LA, tel: Janet Webster, (0527) 57515, OR Richard Sawtell, (0742) 252701.** "Shropshire Lass" is purpose built 70 ft canal cruiser, births for eight people. Lyneal Wharf has a cottage and two bedrooned bungalows. Accomodation for up to sixteen people. Canoeing, sailing, fishing and bird-watching available. Open from March to October.

**Reneroy IV.** Catamaran, access for 10 wheelchair users, 70 person capacity, operates throughout the summer on the River Stour at Grove Ferry, between Canterbury and Thanet in Kent. Cost: £1.50 an hour for adults and 80p for children.



**One of three swimming pools at Mar y Sol, Tenerife.**

Extra-wide boat has propellers at each end, specially contructed to minimise wash damage. May be chartered for parties and outings. Contact Roy or Irene Newing, The Boat House, Grove Ferry Road, Upstreet, Canterbury, Kent CT3 4BP, tel: (0227) 86345.

## Guides

**Handicapped Aid Trust, 21 Malden Hill, New Malden, Surrey KT3 4DS, tel: 01-336**

2064. Provides useful information to help towards cost of helpers.

**Holiday Care Service, 2 Old Bank Chambers, Station Road, Horley, Surrey RH9 9HW, tel: (0293) 774535.** Resource of 260 information sheets covering wide range of destinations and types of accommodation. Also runs **Holiday Helpers**, introducing experienced volunteers to anyone seeking a carer.

**Holidays: A Guide For Disabled People.** Available free of charge from GLAD, 336 Brixton Road, London SW9 7AA, tel: 01-274 0107. Includes information on finance, accommodation, holidays abroad, group, outdoor and youth holidays, and practical advice.

**International Disabled Travellers Club, 28b Leyes Avenue, Letchworth, Herts SG6 3EW, tel: 0462 676100/480346.** Publish *The Traveller*: details national and international holiday ideas, and offers discounts on tickets and ferry bookings. Area reps can be contacted throughout the UK. Has members in every country in Europe, and many worldwide, collecting data on access and compiling maps and guides.

**The National Trust, 36 Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1H 9AS, tel: 01-222 9251.** Publish a guide called *Facilities for Disabled and Visually Handicapped Visitors in 1989*, detailing access and special features such as scented flower gardens in their properties. An adventure area at the Stackpole property in North Wales provides abseiling for people in wheelchairs. Properties in Cumbria, Cornwall and on the

Isle of Wight have been adapted for disabled people.

**RADAR, 25 Mortimer Street, London W1N 8AB, tel: 01-637 5400,** publish *Holidays in the British Isles 1989—A Guide for Disabled People* (£3 from WHSmith, £4.50 from RADAR) and *Holidays and Travel Abroad* (£2 from WHSmith, £3 from RADAR). New editions on sale in January.

The Tourism for All working party, set up by the Holiday Care Service and the English Tourist Board, will be discussing attitudes towards disabled people on holiday at their March meeting. Their report will be published later in the year. If you have any experiences you would like to share, good or bad, please contact Merle Davies, The Spastics Society, 16 Fitzroy Square, London W1P 5HQ, tel: 01-387 9571.

**Fairview**

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**One of a kind**

**For further information contact:**  
**Sandra Kursey, 2 Tilekiln Lane, Hastings, East Sussex TN35 5EN**  
**Tel: (0424) 420880**

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 as featured on BBC TV's *The Travel Show*

□ UK AGENT: Lynne James, 7 Overpool Road, Ellesmere Port, South Wirral L66 1JW (Tel: 051 339 5316)

Somehow I knew I was pregnant even before buying a pregnancy testing kit. I felt different in an indescribable way. So when I asked the chemist which of the home testing kits to buy, there was some inevitability involved.

Mark and I discussed the possibility in the car on the way home and I don't think he quite believed it when I said, "You know, I do think I am pregnant".

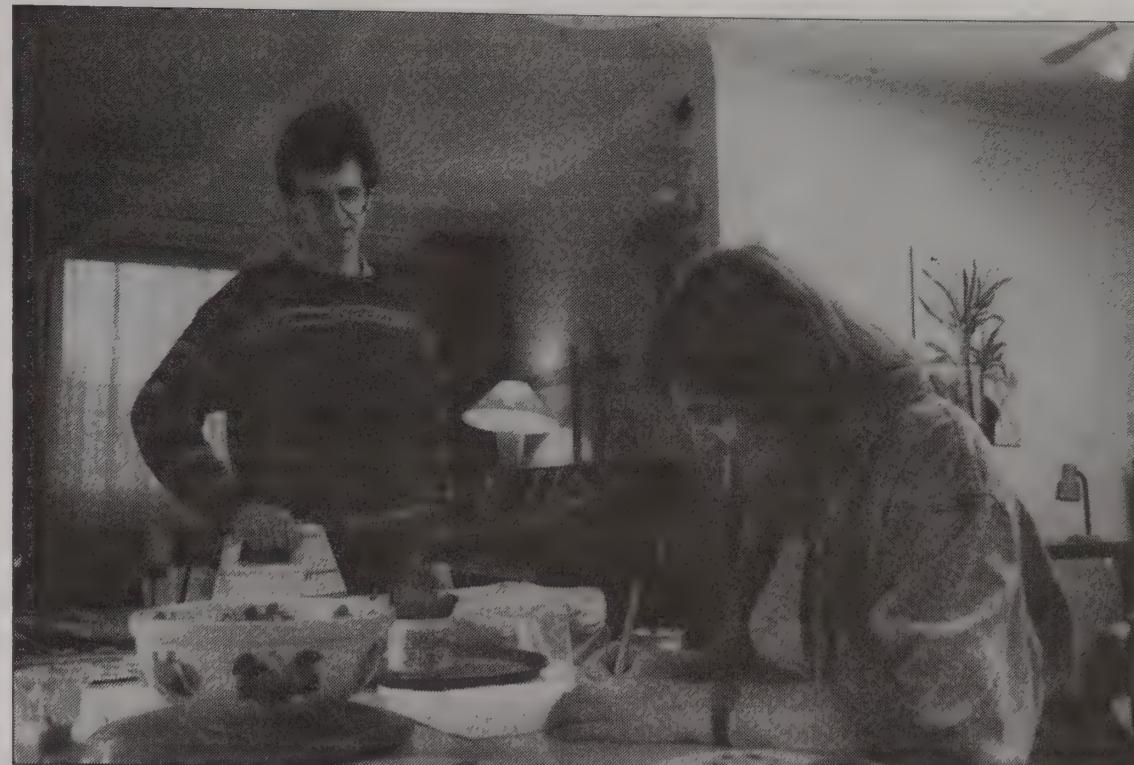
We had visitors in the afternoon, but I couldn't wait to do the test so I started it off even though they were there.

I couldn't concentrate on the conversation because I was dying to get back into the bathroom to see the final result. And sure enough the test had turned very blue.

Eventually our visitors left and I told Mark the news and he was overjoyed.

I rang my doctor who agreed to come and see us, which she did later on in the day.

I hadn't really thought about my disability until then – actually I felt pretty normal. But the doctor told me that I would probably need a Caesarian



Sharing the chores. "I don't mind doing the shopping, but I get rather ratty over doing the list", he says. "You've always been better at ironing, even when I could iron", she says.

LEON MORRIS

## Isobel's baby: pregnancy

In the first of two articles, Isobel Ward, composer, sax player, artist and a presenter of *One in Four* talks about her latest project

completely normal pregnancy and birth."

Mark and I were very pleased. But if our baby needs to be born by Caesarian we would happily go along with that too.

It is being told that you will probably need one without any explanation that can be very disconcerting and this, I presume, is the same for most disabled, pregnant women. (I would advise a woman with any sort of disability to consult her

There are some difficulties I had to overcome being pregnant and disabled. One is using the weighing machine, a basic "stand on" variety, from a wheelchair.



Non-slip tray helps Isobel to transport hot drinks safely. Rhoda interferes though.

own specialist before trying for a baby so that she can be put fully in the picture).

In my case there may be a problem with the final stage of labour – pushing the baby's head out – because multiple sclerosis has affected my bladder and bowel control. But the obstetrician says this may simply mean a forceps delivery, which is commonly used when women become too tired to put in the final effort.

Instead I have had an extra ultrasound scan which can measure the size of the baby exactly and so far the baby has been exactly on target.

Even though I am on a special diet because I have multiple allergies, the baby seems to be getting all the nutrients it needs.

I sailed through the first few weeks of pregnancy with only a very vague nauseous feeling. Needing to go to the loo a lot wasn't exactly out of my experience.

I did get the metallic taste in my mouth, but I took advantage of free dental treatment to get my teeth scaled and polished.

I then went through a period of feeling very tired and needing to sleep, but it was a healthy tiredness not an MS type of tiredness. I did have some mood swings, but that's also not usual.

I had expected to feel more and more cumbersome being in a wheelchair, but actually with each stage I have got stronger and been surprised at how well I have managed.

It is only now, at 32 weeks, that



Picking up a pen.

section, which brought reality crashing down on me. Yes, perhaps I am different; perhaps I will need special care. At that point, what had started out as an exciting prospect became something to feel concerned about.

I was passed on to the consultant obstetrician at King's College Hospital, London, our nearest hospital. At my first consultation she asked me if I had any concerns. I told her about the Caesarian section.

"Why would you need that?" she asked. "There is absolutely no need unless like any other woman you need one. You should be able to go through a



DN's signature tune (hear it on the tape) was composed and recorded by Isobel and Mark in this studio.

runs them. But I find it is tiring to go there, Mark has to come too, and my experiences are obviously not the same as other, able-bodied women.

Now I have found a brilliant cassette called *Happy Birth Day* which covers all I need to know – relaxation, breathing, exercises, anything they would tell you at the classes.

I think I have been very lucky in having forward-looking health professionals involved with my pregnancy. Other people's experiences may not have been so happy.

It seems that the attitudes of some GPs need to change – not so much the midwives or specialists. This is due, I'm sure, to lack of education and experience in dealing with disabled, pregnant women.

Hopefully, a new video about pregnancy and disability being made by a freelance TV producer, Mukti Jain Campion, in which I have been involved, will help to put this right. She has also written a book, to be published later in 1989.

*Happy Birth Day* is available from Professional Educational Training Aids Ltd, 127 High Street, Hampton Hill, Middx TW12 1NF, telephone 01-941 4456, £5.99 plus 40p post and packing.

Mukti Jain Campion's 40 minute video, *Isobel's Baby*, follows the various stages of Isobel Ward's pregnancy and the birth of her baby and involves obstetricians, midwives and nurses. It is for disabled women, particularly those with mobility problems, and health professionals. £10 from Arrowhead Productions, 51 Thames Village, Hartington Road, London W4 3UF, telephone 01-994 0896.

Her book, *The Baby Challenge*, a handbook on pregnancy for women with physical disabilities, is to be published by Souvenir Press.

## Q: WHEN IS A CHAIR NOT A CHAIR?

### A: WHEN IT'S A FLEMMING FROM PARKER CARE.

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DNS



**Jo Skrimshire**, with severe visual impairment, studies at Birmingham University. She sings soprano and has been among five musicians awarded an Opportunities Music Scholarship. Here she is singing in an event held in Oxfordshire in aid of the organisation. Further scholarships will be available in 1989; ring Sam Gallop on 01-726 4963 for details.

## BOOKS

**Cerebral Palsy: Problems and Practice**  
by Margaret Griffiths and Mary Clegg  
(Souvenir Press, Horizon Series, hardback £10.95, paperback £6.95.)

This much needed book is sympathetically written and eminently readable, leaving the parent finely balanced between realism and optimism.

The authors' unrivalled experience in the field of cerebral palsy and particularly its early treatment – one is a paediatrician, the other a

paediatric physiotherapist – is apparent throughout the book.

The information is right up to date – for instance, the current preoccupation with Conductive Education, though not described in detail, is acknowledged and assessed with a fairness and wisdom that characterises the whole book.

The authors advocate a multidisciplinary team approach associated with the many regional child development centres that have sprung up over the past decade. Their emphasis is on individual treatment programmes designed for each child after investigation by a team of experts.

They are aware of the danger that parents might "feel overwhelmed by the number of professionals who are involved in

helping their child" and emphasise the need for a "key worker" to be in direct contact with the family.

Having witnessed the Welsh rugby team allowing tries to go abegging because the scrum half was too slow against Romania, I feel there will always be a danger of confusion and poor communication if the importance of the "key worker" in representing and safe-guarding the family interests is underestimated.

Throughout the book the authors set out the likely effects of a child's disability on himself and his family. Although a programme of treatment may be designed, there is no clear advice as to how the family might avoid the spectrum of stresses. No matter how they may resolve to be otherwise, families with a disabled child are themselves inevitably disabled.

I would have liked more on what to do to avoid the more commonly experienced difficulties of parents and siblings. I suspect this is an area of provision that is regularly lacking and where self-help groups and voluntary organisations may have their most effective role.

**Hedley Chappell**

### Who Cares

by Cherrill Hicks  
(Virago, £5.95)

This is a book in which the carer's voice comes over loud and clear, and for that reason alone should be read by both professionals and carers.

It deals with a wide selection of carers and their situations. There will not be many carers who will not find something of their own caring role mirrored somewhere in this book.

After more than five years of dealing on a daily basis with carers, I never cease to be amazed at the way they are expected to cope with the emotional and physical strain of caring, and appalled at how little help, if any, is available to them. Most caring is done out of love or duty (or a combination of both); rarely out of choice.

Carer speaking about her mother: "She goes to bed saying thank God the day is over. I say 'Mother, that's my life you are talking about'."

Although, to me, the most important part of the book is where carers are telling their stories, I was glad to see Cherrill Hicks has included chapters on residential care, benefits, the Disabled Persons' Act and the DHSS.

Just in case that may seem a turn off, I assure you that it is all very readable.

Carer speaking: "The services are so appalling and we get treated so badly in the way we get spoken to. I was either not advised at all, misinformed or patronised."

Cherrill Hicks wisely allows carers to speak for themselves. But she has interwoven her own comments within the book so well that reading is no hardship.

Carers must continue to make their voices heard – Cherrill Hicks has done a great service in helping them to do just that. Do read it – I defy anyone to remain unmoved.

**Margaret Jeffries**

## MOTORING

### Wheels into wheels

Geraldine Holden discovered the ease of the autochair; Merle Davies had a run-through on a Remploy system.

Autochair of Derbyshire supply the Meyland Person Lift which is manufactured in Denmark.

The lift, which fits inside the car near the door hinges, works off the car's electrics and is operated by a simple control box.

It can be fitted on any type or make of car as long as the car door opens to a minimum of 98 cm.

Disabled drivers would need enough dexterity to be able to slide a sling down their back and under their bottom (unless it was already over the back of their wheelchair). Then two pieces of the sling go between the legs and the sling clamps onto the lift in four positions.

The lift will raise users



**Using the hoist to get aboard.**

Remploy Wheelchair Division are now marketing an Autobility System which appeared several years ago from another company but has been taken over by Remploy and re-designed.

It is intended to give complete independence to drivers of Ford Escorts and Vauxhall Astras who use a wheelchair. The system can also be used by a disabled passenger who does not want to be, or cannot be, lifted.

A special wheelchair forms part of the system. It folds to a width of five and a half inches but has conventional side-hung footrests and mainwheel brakes.

The user positions the chair besides the open door, removes the arm rests and stows them and then transfers to the car seat. The back of the chair is folded forwards and attached to an electric hoist on the inside of the car door.

At the press of a button, the wheels of the chair are lifted to just above the door sill and the chair with its folded seat-back is level with the bottom of the window.

The inner wheel on the chair has to be removed by pressing a knob at the hub and brought into the car. The user has to slide the seat along to the correct position for driving.

I found several aspects of the system difficult to handle.

vertically at the push of a button and then they have to swing themselves into the car.

One of the Meyland's advantages is that when not in use, it can be taken out of the car and used around the house – in the bathroom for example.

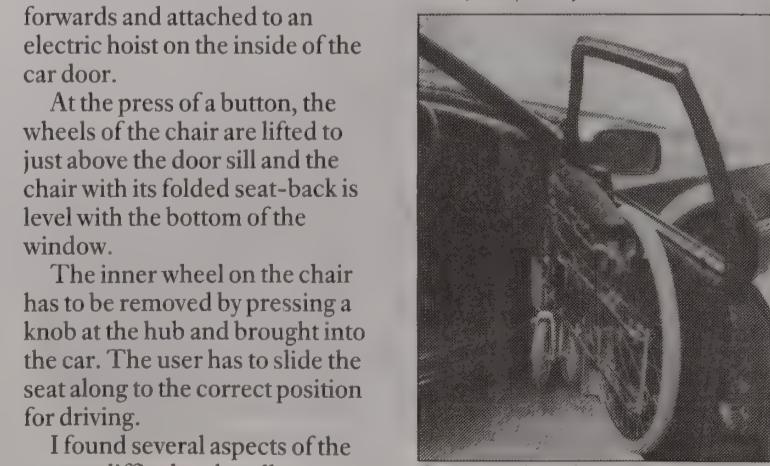
The majority of Meyland users are car passengers but David Walker at Autochair says disabled drivers who do not have the strength to lift themselves in and out of their car will be able to use the lift.

John Oldfield of Wadhurst has the lift fitted in his Peugeot Estate and uses it when he takes out his sister who is paraplegic. He says the lift is ideal and highly recommends it.

"When the lift is taken out, the car is virtually unchanged for other passengers and when it is being used, the car looks no different from the outside."

The Meyland Lift costs £985 including the lift and all parts. The fitting costs will depend on the car and what the agent charges for labour. There are agents around the country.

**David Walker, Autochair, Millford Lane, Bakewell, Derbyshire DE4 1DX, tel: (0629) 813493.**



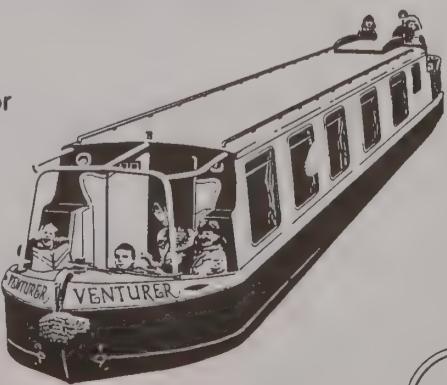
**A clever door innovation.**

## RADIO OXFORD NARROWBOAT TRUST

We operate a newly-launched 70-foot steel narrowboat to give trips and holidays to handicapped and disadvantaged children and young people from in and around the Oxfordshire and surrounding area between the ages of 5 and 21. Cruising amongst superb scenery on the Oxford Canal and the River Thames, the 'Radio Oxford Venturer' has been purpose-built to accommodate handicapped users, featuring a wheelchair lift for cabin access, wide gangways and gangplanks, and a full range of comfortable living facilities.

You can book the Venturer for trips lasting from a few hours to a few days – we provide a skipper or, in some cases, you can provide your own. Self-help groups, special schools, childrens homes, families and voluntary organisations have all already enjoyed cruising on two of the finest waterways in England, so take a narrow-minded view and contact:

Mark Saville  
Skipper/Co-ordinator  
c/o Ormerod School  
Waynflete Road  
Headington  
Oxford  
OX3 8DD



## DANCE

## Espace Libre

Creamh is an exciting arts project based in Liege, Belgium. It was started eight years ago by Luc Boulanger, an artist working with people with severe learning difficulties in long-stay institutions.

Realising the limitations and frustrations of the arts in such an environment, he squatted a building in the centre of a park and invited groups to visit him and other artists there.

Eventually the project was taken on financially by the Government and has become a huge success, offering programmes in fine art, sculpture, music and theatre.

One of the fruits of Creamh's work was at The Greenwich Young People's Theatre (GYPT) last month. Two performers with Down's Syndrome and their tutor performed *Espace Libre*, a piece by the group on the theme of bees.

Professional musicians had composed an accompanying score, performed live.

The piece has no storyline but is a succession of powerful, evocative images and tableaux. The performers moved with an energy and passion similar to early 1960s theatre.

There is a gentle humour running through the piece and on the night I saw it the audience, which largely consisted of people with learning difficulties, enjoyed it immensely.

The style is very much in the mode of performance art – bare stage and frantic movements combined with sporadic dialogue all produce the feeling, "Haven't I seen this somewhere before?"

You'd be wrong. This freedom on stage is new in the world of disability arts. You cannot make comparisons with Heart 'n Soul or Amici, as they use accessible art forms familiar from mainstream events.

The members of Creamh are breaking that mould, they encourage expression by taking the lead from the students.

They are taking a chance – not everyone appreciates this type of theatre. But then isn't that what it's all about? Challenging accepted norms, struggling with new forms of expression and offering different perspectives.

Creamh is over here at the invitation of GYPT, who run their own full-time arts course for people with learning difficulties. A large part of their funding comes from ILEA – no-one knows if they will survive the guillotine of its abolition.

GYPT should feel confident because they have always led the way in this area of work and have a wealth of supporters.

In the meantime, I hope Creamh return very soon. I have plenty of questions to ask and that, for me, is the test of "good" art. It raises more questions than answers, provokes discussion and causes us to re-think what is acceptable. More please, soon!

Ashley Grey



Steve Burns was paralysed from the waist down after a minor work accident. *Look Me In The Eye* is a collaborative photography exhibition by Rich Grassick, Kitty Fitzgerald and Steve, showing him at work and play, "a human being, not an abnormality". Until 29 January at the Side Gallery, 9 Side, Newcastle upon Tyne.

RICH GRASSICK

## ART

## Beasts and Boxes

"I find the process of sculpture enlivening rather than draining," says Adam Reynolds at his December exhibition, Beasts and Boxes. "It's a very physical, active and non-verbal thing, and it suits me far more than writing, which I tried for awhile. The energy comes from a different place. You can be tired, but at the same time refreshed."

He prefers autumn as the season for putting a show together, and is now on his third one, filling the bare white space of his gallery with carved stone, cast gargoyles, a lead balloon and a mysterious box filled with layers of earth, a coffin, and various subterranean things.

Reynolds works in a smaller room adjacent to the exhibition, and lives upstairs. So the whole place is thick with an air of workmanlike pursuit, stone dust whitening the floor and heavy tools hanging on the walls.

Working with lead, concrete, stone and wood, he has more or less had to re-invent processes for casting and manipulating materials since graduating in history and modern languages with no formal arts training.

He has used lead stripped from his own roof, soldered together to form a balloon, and he has joined bits of body and legs when a mould breaks awkwardly. It may sound unprofessional, but the sculptor is far from green about the tricks he plays: "I prefer to work with things that have already had a life of their own, and a lot of my

pieces have an element of faking something old, so it doesn't matter if a part is broken."

What results is a gently teasing sense of the absurd. There are moon-faced gargoyles dangling idly from a picture rail. There are faces coming slowly into focus out of ragged rock. And a box, slightly open, with a glimmer of gold-dust inside: "it's called Alchemy, because that's a desire for the impossible," says Reynolds, "and the initials on it

idea of the infra-structure of a body, then you can alter the elements as much as you like, keeping the logic of the shape."

Reynolds, with muscular dystrophy, works extremely close to the floor of his studio, and some of the stony faces seem to echo this proximity, almost kissing the ground they rest on.

There were a couple of works which fell uneasily between tempting ambiguity and fully polished product, and seemed



Adam Reynolds' gargoyles "tend to be a bit skinny."

are the ones I used as a teenage pseudonym. It seemed appropriate that they should be of an imaginary dead person, also part of myself."

Another part of himself is in the gargoyle figures, charmingly known as Stanley and Charles.

"I'm the only one around, so you have a quick look, and that's why they tend to be a bit skinny," he admits. "Once you have an

half-completed.

One seated gargoyle looked more constipated than perplexing.

But overall it is a fascinating, thought-provoking show, and has a quality which sets it apart from so much art: you want to touch. You want to feel and hold and weigh it in your hand. In brief, it's got soul.

David Nicholson

record shops, or by mail order from IMW, 44 Peartree St, EC1 £1.85 inc.

Quicksilver Theatre for children have a new production for Easter, *Mr Biff the Boxer*, an adaptation from a story by Allan and Janet Ahlberg. It will be on at the Polka Children's Theatre, Wimbledon, London SW19 from 21 March – 15 April. Prices

£3.30, £3 (group bookings of 11 or more) and £2.50 (schools). Tel: 01-543 4888.

Two Christmas shows are to have special sign language productions. The Tyne Theatre Company and ISIGN, have joined together for *The Wizard of Oz*, 9 January and *Fishy Tales*, 13 January. Box Office (091) 232 3421/0899.

## TELEVISION



In two 50 minute episodes of *The Visit: Rescue from Autism* (BBC1, 9 and 16 November) Desmond Wilcox examined a new and increasingly popular treatment for autism, 'holding therapy'.

Past visits have been noted for emotive dramatisations of what, without Wilcox's turn of phrase, might have been simply factual accounts. But in these programmes the commentary merely underlined the drama inherent in the treatment: the autistic child is physically held close until he or she gives way and relates, by eye contact or verbal recognition, to the holder.

For viewers and participants alike it is harrowing and exhausting – eminently suitable for a Desmond Wilcox programme. But he gave too little time to the doctor, a mother of an autistic child, who doubted the claims made for holding.

*The Visit* was to autism what *Standing up for Joe* was to cerebral palsy. The word 'cure' didn't have to be mentioned – just implied. Hopefully, not too many people are disappointed.

Just after Children in Need's annual parade of *Children of Courage* (BBC1, 18 November), *The Media Show* (C4, 20 November) questioned the very need for marathon television appeals.

The basis of the questioning was wrong, founded on the idea that such appeals are doing a job which ought to be the state's responsibility, so giving the Government a way of opting out of caring. Ideally perhaps, but no political party is ever going to make enough provision to make charities obsolete.

A more realistic question is how to prevent these appeals reinforcing stereotypes of disability and exploiting pathetic images in order to obtain money.

Ironically, the only mention of this came from a non-disabled journalist. A missed opportunity.

The appeal itself appeared less emotive this year. Perhaps somebody is listening after all.

*Hand in Hand* (C4, weekly, from 16 November) is supposedly for deaf and hearing children. It's actually geared to gaining sympathetic sighs from hearing parents. The talents of the deaf people in this programme were wasted. The signed songs by Ray Harrison Graham and Sarah Scott deserve a wider audience.

*Blankety Blank* (BBC1, 25 November) featured a contestant in a wheelchair. "Featured" is the right word, as Les Dawson helped her from behind the desk and wheeled her off. For some viewers this may seem wrong, but quiz shows shouldn't be over-discreet about having disabled contestants, or how are other disabled people to know they are welcome?

Chris Davies

## Look out for...

**Everyman**, BBC1, New Years Day, 10.35pm, looks at the role of charity in helping to run places like Martha House, a home for eight young people with severe disabilities.

Heart 'n Soul's debut single *Peace on Earth* (see DN November) is out now on IMW Records and is available in

It's all very well to make a New Year resolution that you will leave home, but difficult to make into a reality when services continue to be cut and costs escalate.

"Knowledge is Power" may be an old saying, but it is still relevant today, especially where facilities and allowances for people with disabilities are concerned. This is why the published results of surveys are so important, as they usually highlight the best - and worst - practises and give potential consumers guidelines about what they can expect to obtain. Here are two letters about housing and support services in the community for people with severe physical disabilities.

**I am twenty-seven, have cerebral palsy, need a lot of help and am wanting to leave home. My mother is at the stage where she can only just manage to take care of me. We are now looking for alternative arrangements.**

I would like to know if other people with similar needs have managed to obtain help and live independently from their families.

I do not see why, nor will I accept that most disabled people have to be put into residential homes. These are expensive so-called solutions. Why should we concede to the pressure to conform?"

I fully understand your wish to move into a home of your own with the personal, domestic and social services that you need.

Some imaginative schemes are available, but they are piecemeal and in very short supply. People like yourself are living in the community in their own homes, but many more are waiting for suitable housing and appropriate support.

# Share Your Problems

with Margaret Morgan

## Leaving home: First steps to independence

*Living Options Lottery*, the report of a survey carried out for the Prince of Wales' Advisory Group on Disability, (see DN November), gives many examples of good, and not-so-good, practise and illustrates the wide range of personal solutions that have been found to meet financial and other needs.

Whether someone can obtain what he or she wants is, however, a lottery as the title indicates and depends on where you live and how local officials interpret and use their statutory and discretionary powers.

I suggest that you borrow or buy a copy of the report, as it gives much valuable information, especially about the maximum support that some people receive. You will then be able to quote these examples to your own local authority.

The report also mentions the *Source Book for Independent Living* produced by members of the Hampshire Centre for Independent Living, which is full of ideas and explains just how to set about establishing yourself in a home of your own.

I do hope you will be successful in your negotiations.

**"I have heard of the Independent Living Fund and I know that some organisations do not approve**

of it. Will you please explain what the Fund is and who can apply?"

The Independent Living Fund was introduced by the Government early in 1988 to provide financial assistance to very severely disabled people who can only live at home if they have a lot of paid help. The Fund has been set up as an interim measure and the amount allocated for 1988/9 is £5 million. It is not known what funds will be available in the future.

The cash will be used to help severely disabled people to continue living in their own homes or to move out of residential or parental homes by paying for the supportive services they need.

Payments from the ILF will be means tested and only a relatively small number of people can be supported in this way.

The application form is clear and comprehensive and explains who is likely to be eligible. I suggest you send for form ILF100 for adults and ILF200 for children. If you are not sure about any points, do discuss them with your local welfare rights officer, citizens advice bureau, or someone who has good knowledge of current disability rights and services.



Several large voluntary organisations, including The Spastics Society, the British Council of Disabled People and RADAR, see the Fund as a "placebo" to offset the bitter pill of reduced benefits following the 1988 Social Security Act. People receiving benefits before April 1988 should not have suffered any reduction in their payments, but new claimants will be affected by the new legislation.

The lobby for a comprehensive disability allowance continues unabated, and it is encouraging to learn that new pressures are being exerted to replace the present fragmented benefits with a unified payment which is part of the main social security system.

Even if you don't wholly agree with the basis on which the Fund was set up, the cash is available this year and it is only by putting in applications that the Government will know just how extensive the demand for independent living resources really are.

*Living Options Lottery, 1988, The Prince of Wales Advisory Group on Disability, 8 Bedford Row, London WC1R 4BA. £6.*

*Source Book for Independent Living: Care Support Ideas - can be bought separately (£5), but was designed to be read with One Step On, the experiences of 3 people now living independently (£9 pair, incl. postage) from HCIL BOOKS, c/o Mark Walsh, 31 Churchfield, Headley, Bordon, Hants GU35 8PF.*

*The King's Fund Centre, 126 Albert Street, London NW1 7NF maintains a register of housing schemes for people with physical disabilities. Send SAE for details.*

*Independent Living Fund, PO Box 183, Nottingham NG8 3RD.*

## PROFILE

### Robin Surgeoner

Robin Surgeoner, quadruple gold medalist at the Seoul Paralympic Games last autumn, received the Bill McGowan Trophy (Sportswriter's Disabled Personality of the Year) at a ceremony at the Wembley Conference Centre in December.

He gained the prestigious award following his wins, and new world records, in the 400m, 200m and 100m freestyle and the 100m breast-stroke.

Also attending the ceremony were golfer Sandy Lyle, sportsman of the year, runner Liz McColgan (women's winner), the victorious UK Olympic Hockey team, and the Princess Royal.



"I've been swimming for 12 years," says Surgeoner, "and have won events every year since the National championships in 1977. My whole family are very sporty - in fact my Dad's a swimming instructor."

Besides swimming, Surgeoner has excelled himself at basketball, table-tennis, archery, water- and snow skiing, and has recently joined a rock band at University. "We're called Dan Dare's Dog," he says, "and we're loud and studenty."

Studying philosophy and sociology at Birmingham, he found the Paralympics an opportunity to experiment with some practical techniques. "Before each event, the finalists all do their best to 'look 'ard', and furtively study each other for signs that someone else is feeling the same as they are. All I can say is thank goodness for mirrored glasses - I was the man with no eyes."

Winning so many races left Surgeoner in "Euphoria city," but it wasn't all so rosy. He slept very little before each race, and ended up "looking," as he puts it, "like a psychopath."

"Back in Birmingham, catching up on work has been a bit of a bitch," he admits, but besides some swimming teaching and guitar practice he has concentrated on not getting fat.

He remains captain of the Southern region swimming team, and still finds time for a few training sessions, though nothing like the 30,000m a week he ploughed through on the way to the Paralympics.

And despite his outstanding achievement, Surgeoner remains modest. "I wouldn't say anyone's in awe of me," he comments, "but they've certainly shown genuine interest."

David Nicholson

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## INFO

**Get that Job** is a new guide for visually handicapped job-hunters with advice on the do's and don'ts of looking for work plus how to cope with a visual handicap when searching for a job. The booklet, in large print, tape or braille, is free (£1 for organisations or multiple copies) and available from RNIB Employment Services, 224 Great Portland Street, London W1N 6AA, tel: 01-388 1266.

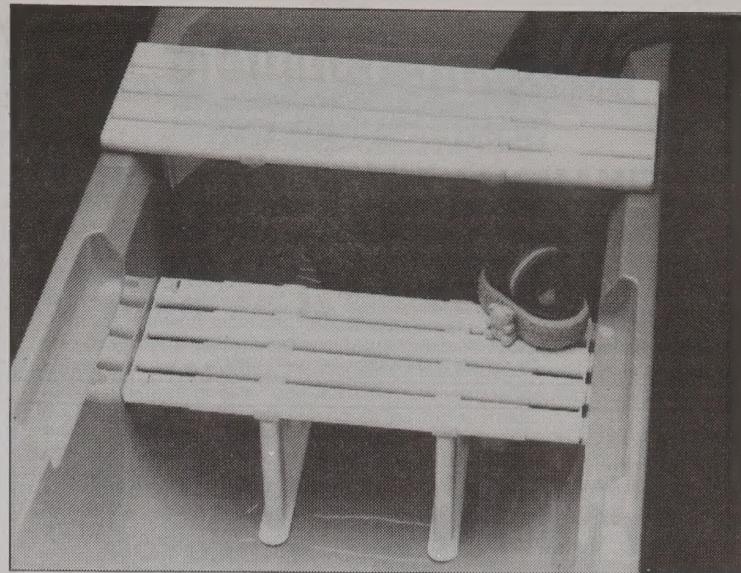
Photographers in wheelchairs can take advantage of **Community Focus**, a fully accessible darkroom and studio in Hendon, designed and modified in consultation with disabled people. The facility, the first of its kind in Greater London, is run by Community & Recreational Arts in Barnet (CRAB) and Community Links in Cameras (CLIC). Information from Maria Barthe on 01-200 8353.

Still on photography, The Open College of the Arts is launching a **National Home-study Photography course**, open to anyone in the UK regardless of qualifications. It will combine over 70 self-assessed exercises with individual guidance by tutors from three leading photography centres. A BBC series called *Snap* will accompany the course. It begins in January and costs £130. Phone (0226) 730495 or write to OCA, Hounds Hill, Worsbrough, Barnsley, South Yorks S70 6TU.

Many people who become disabled or have a disabled child are given little or no information about services or benefits and feel isolated and frustrated. *If only I'd known that a year ago* is a guide for newly disabled people, their families and friends, from RADAR. It includes aids and equipment, employment, mobility and relationships. Just send a large SAE to RADAR, 25 Mortimer Street, London W1N 8AB.

**The Women's Support Project** in Glasgow produces material on domestic violence, rape, sexual assault and incest. Some of this is on tape and cassette for blind or partially sighted women. The Project is interested to hear from any women with disabilities who do self-defence or their teachers. It is also interested in any research into violence against women with disabilities. Contact Patricia Bell, Women's Support Project, Newlands Centre, 871 Springfield Road, Glasgow G31 4H9, tel: 041-554 5669.

**The Carers** is a new open learning programme from The Open College, starting in February. It is for all those working in residential or community care and will lead towards The City & Guilds certificate in Community Care Practice (325). The course has an associated television series by Thames TV, 1-1.30pm each Wednesday from 15 February on C4. The Open College, Suite 470, St James Buildings, Oxford Street, Manchester M1 6FQ, tel: 061-228 6415.



## CHECKOUT

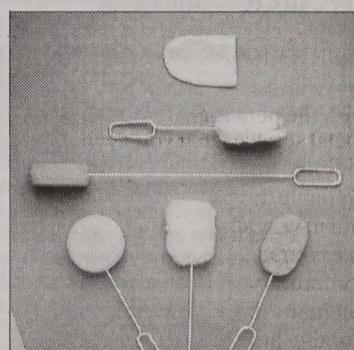
The toilet frame, £29.95 and tap turner, £7.25 (above left) are from Boots new catalogue *Healthcare in the Home 1989*. From all Boots branches.

A luxurious hydrotherapy spa system (bottom left) fits into your bath and gives aerated, underwater massage plus enriched ozone. Around £500. For a brochure or no-obligations trial contact Martel Hydro, tel: 01-642 3597.

Inexpensive Medici Bathboard, £10 and Bathseat, £19.26 (top right) from Keep Able, Fleming Close, Park Farm, Wellingborough, Northants, tel: (0933) 679426 or Homecraft Supplies, Low Moor Estate, Kirkby-in-Ashfield, Notts, tel: (0623) 754047.

If standing for long periods is a problem, a hairwash basin and stand, £54.60 (middle right) might be useful. Keep Able.

Sponges (bottom right) on long handles, £3-3.50 from Homecraft Supplies.



## WHAT'S ON

**Communication and Mobility** is the theme of the 1989 Conference at Nash House, 1 February. Demonstrations of aids for disabled people. 10am - 4pm. Fee £10 per person including buffet lunch. Details and registration forms from Bernard Cordingley, Nash House & Conney Hill School, Croydon Road, Hayes, Bromley, Kent BR2 7AG. Tel: 01-462 5493

**Successes and failures in fundraising**. 8 February. Half day seminar at the Thomas Coram Foundation, 40 Brunswick Square, London WC1. 2.30pm - 5pm. Cost £20. For further information contact Tony Waters (0747) 870490 or Ann McLaughlin 01-435 8171.

**New Developments in Technology and Disability**. 9 March. Day course at Lincolnshire House, Brumby Wood Lane, Scunthorpe. Cost: £6 - voluntary workers, disabled people and relatives, £10 - professionals. (Includes lunch). FREE, 2pm - 3pm, for visitors to exhibition. For further details contact Ian Millard (0724) 844168.

**First British Dyslexia Association International Conference**, 29 March - 1 April, at the City of Bath College of Further Education. Details from Conference Organiser, British Dyslexia Association, 98 London Road, Reading, Berks RG1 5AU. Tel: (0734) 668271.

**Every Body for Leisure**. Regular leisure activities for disabled youngsters - includes swimming, football, trampolining and short tennis. Further information from: Alan Dunlop, Project Co-ordinator - "Every Body Active", School of Humanities, Sunderland Polytechnic, tel (091) 567 6231, or The Crowtree Leisure Centre on (091) 514 2511.

**Training Schemes** for those wishing to work with people with severe and multiple learning difficulties: **Through the Senses** - for artists wishing to develop their work with people in long-term institutions; **Coping & Caring** for teachers in SLD schools preparing their stu-

dents for living in the community on an equal basis; **Emotional Environments** for care workers in institutions looking for new ways to develop relationships with residents. Contact: Ashley Grey, Action Space London Events, The Drill Hall Arts Centre, 16 Chenies Street, London WC1E 7ET. Tel: 01-631 4468

## Courses at Castle Priory

**Housing & Residential Accommodation for People with Disabilities** 6 - 8 February. For architects, occupational therapists and administrators. Tuition £95. Residence £49. Non-residence £20.

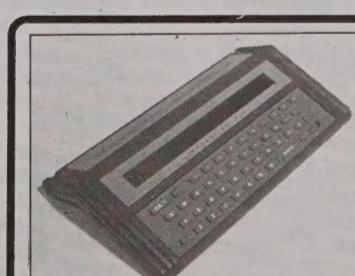
**Improving Services Through Team Building** 8 - 10 February\*

**Bridging the Gap - transition from school to adulthood for those with Special Needs** - for staff in schools/colleges or adult centres.\*

**The Needs of Siblings** for staff from all professions. 17 - 19 February.\*

\*Tuition £75. Residence £49. Non-residence £20.

Further information from Castle Priory College, Thames Street, Wallington, Oxon OX10 0HE. Please enclose SAE. Tel: (0491) 37551.



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Shape London is an Equal Opportunities Employer. Applications from disabled people are particularly welcome.

Details from: Shape London (Ref FA1), 1 Thorpe Close, London W10 5XL.

Closing date for applications January 20, 1989.

# South West Artshare

the charitable organisation which makes the creative arts available and accessible to people with disabilities and special needs from Gloucestershire to Cornwall is seeking a:

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Responsibility for fundraising, staffing, co-ordination and development of resources and projects. Management experience essential. Write/phone for details:

Artshare South West, c/o Exeter & Devon Arts Centre, Bradninch Place, Gandy Street, EXETER EX4 3LS. (0392) 218923.

Artshare is an Equal Opportunities Employer and particularly welcomes applications from people with disabilities.

Job sharers welcome. Re-location of Regional Office a possibility. Closing date 10 January 1989.

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To lead a team of six on a programme which will span 16 departments - turning the words on paper into concrete action.

For both jobs you will need a commitment to, and working knowledge of, equal opportunities in local government; previous experience of achieving change in a bureaucracy; management skills and, above all, the ability to deliver changes within fixed timescales.

These posts are open to Job Share.

Application forms and job descriptions are available from the Chief Executive's Staff Office, PO Box 532, Town Hall, Manchester, M60 2LA. Tel: 061 234 3077.

Closing date 12th January 1989.

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Applicants should have knowledge of general office environment and procedures together with basic literacy and numeracy skills. The ability to work under pressure to deadlines is also required.

For an application form please write to: The Chief Executive's Department, Personnel & Management Services Division, Town Hall, East Ham, London E6 2RP or telephone 01 471 0619 (24 hour answering service). Please quote reference PMS/R1. Closing date: 20th January 1989.

Newham Council is committed to an equal opportunities policy. This means that the Council is committed to ensuring that no job applicant or employee will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of race, age, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, disability, or is disadvantaged by condition of requirements which cannot be seen to be justifiable.

All jobs are open for job sharers, unless otherwise stated.

## CERTIFICATE IN DISABILITY STUDIES

(Community Mental Handicap)

Applications are invited for the University of Exeter, Exeter Health Authority and British Institute of Mental Handicap 60 day multi-disciplinary post-qualification course for community mental handicap team members starting February 1989. CCETSW approved.

Details from: Dr. Chris Williams, Centre for Disability Studies, Larkby, Victoria Park Road, Exeter, EX2 4NU. Tel: 0392 52079.

## THERAPEUTIC MASSAGE AROMATHERAPY, REFLEXOLOGY

For free consultation phone

London 01-203 6944

(Leicester) 0533 549331/739911

## DATES FOR THE DISABLED - A BETTER LIFE

36 Park Grove,

Edgware, Middx HA8 7SJ.

Tel: 01-958 1095 (5.15pm-7.15pm)

## ADMINISTRATOR

Common Ground Dance Theatre, a company of deaf & hearing dancers, actors & musicians have an extensive programme of touring planned for 1989-90. Applications are invited from people with a background in dance and/or theatre administration. Disabled people are particularly invited to apply.

Duties will include: the daily administration of the Company, planning of touring work, book-keeping and liaison with funding bodies.

Hours and Salary negotiable

Deadline for applications: Friday 20th Jan. 1989. Please send C.V. to: C.G.D.T., Hanwell Community Centre, Westcott Crescent, London W7 1PD. Tel: 01-575 1078 or 579 3626 (24hr).



### LET US TRY AND HELP YOU FIND A PARTNER

Ladies should not be shy of applying! There are gentlemen in abundance!

All enquiries to: Handidate  
The Wellington Centre  
52 Chevalier Street  
Ipswich, Suffolk IP1 2PB  
Telephone: (0473) 226950

## SPEED WELL WITH SUPAKART

The Mobile Aid with Children in Mind

★ Suitable for ages 6 - Adult

★ A Battery Operated Vehicle



BERKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL  
(Speedwell Enterprises)  
FREEPOST, Slough SL1 3BR  
Telephone: 0753 72249

## HOLIDAYS

Thornbury Hall Hotel stands in 5 acres of ground amidst beautiful countryside. Situated 2 miles from Cheadle in Churnet Valley, peace and quiet but close to Alton Towers, Peak National Park, Potteries etc. Specialised facilities for disabled. Companion service available (no extra cost). Colour TV in bedrooms. For full brochure write to Thornbury Hall Hotel, Lockwood Road, Kingsley Holt, Stoke on Trent, Staffordshire ST10 2DH. Tel: (0538) 757220.

Will access be easy? Are the rooms big enough? Is there a lift? For a trouble-free holiday with all the family try ASHWELL THORPE HALL HOTEL. A discreetly adapted manor house set in acres of beautiful grounds. 22 bedrooms

- centrally heated throughout - licensed bars - free use of wheelchairs and other aids - mini-bus - half or full board. Tel: (050) 841 324 ... or write to The Manager, Ashwellthorpe Hall Hotel, Ashwellthorpe, Norwich NR16 1EX.

South Humberside Spastics Society is taking bookings for its seaside holiday bungalow at Cleethorpes from Easter-October. It sleeps 6 and is fully accessible for disabled people. £40 a week. Contact Mrs E M Culbeck, 154 North Sea Lane, Humberston, South Humberside DN36 4XB. Tel: (0472) 812505.

If you would like DN on tape contact Gayle Mooney on 01-636 5020 ext 244.

## Shape, Bucks CO-ORDINATOR £11,000

We are looking for an imaginative and energetic Co-ordinator to manage and run all aspects of this new organisation, to fundraise, and to develop and implement its policies to create arts opportunities for disabled and elderly people in Buckinghamshire. Applications from disabled people are actively encouraged. Training is available. Knowledge of working with people of various disabilities would be an advantage. (1 year contract, renewable).

Details from: Shape Bucks, c/o Pat Swell, Buckinghamshire Arts Association, 55 High Street, Aylesbury, Bucks HP20 1SA. (0296) 434704. Closing date: 27th January - Interviews end February.

## The LONDON DISABILITY ARTS FORUM

require a

(part-time)

## FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION WORKER

Salary £11,700 Pro Rata

The London Disability Arts Forum is one of Europe's foremost Disability Arts Organisations, which is run by and for Disabled people.

The aim of the forum is to facilitate the greater involvement of Disabled people in the Disability Arts Movement and the Arts in general.

The principle role of the worker will be to secure the Financial and Administrative base of the organisation, as well as working closely with the Development Worker on the creative aspects of the Forum's work.

We are seeking a Disabled person with a broad knowledge of Arts and Disability issues, some experience in administration and financial control would be a bonus as well as a willingness to fundraise. However, some training can be offered.

For further information and a Job Description please contact:

The London Disability Arts Forum,  
c/o Artsline,  
5 Crown Lane,  
London NW1 1TU.  
Telephone 01-383 4479.

Deadline for applications, 28th January 89.

The London Disability Arts Forum is an equal opportunities employer.

The work environment will be fully accessible.



As part of the Council's commitment to employ more people with disabilities, the following post will be reserved for disabled applicants only on this occasion.

Planning

## Trainee Planner

Salary £7335 - £12729 Career grade Post G90

The City Planning Department wishes to recruit a Trainee Planner who will be given the opportunity to gain first hand experience in each of the Planning Branches as part of an on-going training and professional development programme. The successful applicant will undertake a three-year part-time day release course at Birmingham Polytechnic leading to a Diploma in Town Planning.

You must hold an approved University or CNA degree or equivalent qualification or have completed a Certificate in Professional Planning Studies. You should also be able to demonstrate an awareness of the physical environment and be keen to qualify and develop a career in Town Planning. As a trainee, your starting salary will be £7335 (under review) and progression through the career grade to a maximum of £12729 will depend on qualifications and experience.

A place may be available at The Workplace Nursery for children aged between 6mths-5yrs, of successful applicants. Where relocation is necessary, expenses to a maximum of £2650 plus approved removal costs, together with help in finding temporary housing accommodation, are available. Application form (returnable by 20th January 1989) and further details, which will include a job description, CALL-IN, RING or WRITE to Director of Personnel and Management Services, 4th Floor, 'B' Block, New Walk Centre, Welford Place, Leicester LE1 6ZG. Tel (0533) 549922 ext 7099 or a recorded message service is available on (0533) 549848.

As part of the City Council's commitment to an Equal Opportunity Policy, applications are welcome from people regardless of marital status, sex, race, sexual orientation or disability. Disabled persons are guaranteed an interview if suitably qualified and/or experienced. Job sharing applications are welcome for all jobs.

Leicester City Council

# TEMPS

## Develop your clerical expertise

**TEMPORARY CLERICAL ASSISTANTS**

**£125 per week (aged 21 and over)**

If you are presently unemployed, or seeking a more varied and rewarding temporary assignment, then opportunities exist to gain further valuable clerical experience to develop and expand your skills! Based within any one of the nine departments, located in either East Ham or Stratford, you will be able to undertake a wide range of clerical duties.

Applicants should have knowledge of general office environment and procedures together with basic literacy and numeracy skills. The ability to work under pressure to deadlines is also required.

For an application form please write to: The Chief Executive's Department, Personnel & Management Services Division, Town Hall, East Ham, London E6 2RP or telephone 01 471 0619 (24 hour answering service). Please quote reference PMS/R1. Closing date: 20th January 1989.

Newham Council is committed to an equal opportunities policy. This means that the Council is committed to ensuring that no job applicant or employee will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of race, age, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, disability, or is disadvantaged by condition of requirements which cannot be seen to be justifiable. All jobs are open for job sharers, unless otherwise stated.

**Newham**  
An Equal Opportunity Authority

**FOR SALE**

**Manual Wheelchair** (Everest & Jennings) folding, fits in car boot. Under warranty until April. New £320. Portable oxygen cylinder with carrying case, mask and refilling adaptor. New £128. Will accept £260 or reasonable offer for both. Tel: 01-881 2748.

**Stannah Stairlift** left hand-straight track. Suitable for 14 tread staircase. Serviced regularly. £800 ono. Tel: (0705) 475003

**Batricar De Luxe** 3 year old, all weather hood & other extras. Excellent working order. £900 ono. Tel: Surrey 01-393 1728. Illness forces sale.

**Elap Rotating Car Seat**. Grey/blue with double sliding facility for Ford Orion/Escort (inc. head restraint for passenger side) Little usage in 4 months. £200. Tel: (0698) 61264.

**Hustler 6 wheeler**. Warning - will turn heads! Professionally built kit. Good cargo. 3 years. Tax. MOT. Wheelchair carrier. Twin heater, radio and CB. £2600 ono. Tel: (04203) 5062.

**Pandora battery powered bicycle**. Hardly used. £200. Tel: (0279) 813609.

**3/4 Bed S/D House**, gas CH, double glazed throughout, vertical lift, electric

hoist, entry ramp, large extension, enlarged bathroom, plumbing for washing machine and dishwasher, off street parking for 2 cars. £129,500. Middx. Tel: 01-578 1777 (h); 01-575 4105 (w).

**Used cars from £3,000**. For a selection of new and used Chairman cars contact GOWRINGS MOBILITY INTERNATIONAL. "Travel in your wheelchair in your car." Dial 100 and ask for Freephone Gowrings.

**Electric wheelchairs/scooters/battery cars**. All makes, models wanted and for sale. Nearly new, hardly used from half price. Demonstrations and collections. Free advice. All areas. Contact Mr Gibbons. Tel: 021-357 4965 anytime.

**Brand new BEC top of the range Sterling Scooter**. £1,200 ono. Tel: (0803) 28017.

**Avon Batricar** - less than half price. Good condition - charger, spare wheel, shopping trolley included. £1200. Tel: (09274) 25456.

**Elswick Envoy White "B"** registered Oct 84. As new. Recorded mileage 52 (fifty two) complete with chair. Fully serviced, long MOT. £5,000 ono. **Salamander** Pale blue "B" registered Nov 84. Recorded mileage 13,000. Automatic, gear shift to drivers right, hand brake to drivers left. Recently serviced.

long MOT. £1,600. Tel: (0268) 762170.

**Metro City 1000cc car**. Converted by Poyntings of Salisbury to take a wheelchair seated passenger. "C" Reg (Jan 86) 6,000 miles only - excellent condition. Stereo/cassette. £5,400. Printed details of car on request. Tel: (0823) 282482 evenings.

Send today for FREE brochure showing the new and unique FRESHOLD BODIPOD attachment for binoculars and cameras. Weighs just 500 grams yet takes all the strain off even the strongest arms! As tested by Bill Oddie. Write or phone Optical Division (Dept 28), IN COURT SPORTS LIMITED, FREEPOST, PO Box 28, Chepstow, Gwent NP6 6XB. Tel: (02912) 71184.

**WANTED**

**SCOPE** - Registered Charity No 286311R Society for Complimentary Therapies for people with disabilities have funds to treat 4-5 disabled young people in the London area. If you fall into that category and are interested in being considered, please contact the SCOPE office. Tel: 01-761 3597.

**FIND A FRIEND**

**Handicapped (not wheelchair) male 48**, living in Cardiff seeks female around same age. Enjoys both going out and homelife. Box No 28.

**Young caring guy**. Slight cp, own flat, wheels, many interests incl. sport, cinema, eating out, country air, pubs, music and the odd night in. Would like to hear from any young lady around 32 with good sense of humour. All letters answered. Box No 29.

**Lady 40** with cp, living and working in a sheltered workshop. Hobbies: pop music, writing letters, going out to the pub and for meals - also weaving, rug making, basket work and toy making. Would like male penfriend aged around 39-40. Box No 30.

**Wanted: Pen friend**. I am male 20 years old, disabled and lonely ... ah! Seeking a pen friend between ages 17-20. Box No 31.

**11 year old girl (able bodied)** would like (female) disabled penfriend. Likes ballet, writing and school. Box No 32.

To reply to a Find-a-Friend advert, indicate the Box Number clearly, mark the envelope Private & Confidential and send it to Disability Now, address on page 20.

**Advertise in DN...**

... and reach over 80,000 people for just £2 a line (minimum £8). Please don't send money with your ad - we will invoice you after it goes in. Find a Friend is free, and all ads are free to members of The Spastics Society and affiliated groups. Phone 01-636 5020 ext 245, or 01-252 1362 for larger boxed ads.

## TRADES UNION CONGRESS

**SOCIAL INSURANCE AND INDUSTRIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT****Policy Assistant**

The TUC has a vacancy for a Policy Assistant in the Social Insurance and Industrial Welfare Department, which deals with a wide range of challenging social policy issues. The person appointed will work primarily in the fields of social security (state and occupational benefits), provision for disabled people, and legal services.

This is a time of rapid and radical changes in social policy and applicants should be able to contribute to an effective TUC response. Applicants should also be committed to and have experience of trade union work, a relevant degree or other qualifications, and knowledge and experience in the law and practice in one or more of the above areas.

The salary is on a scale from £13,107 to £17,205 including London Weighting.

For further details and application form please write to the General Secretary, Trades Union Congress, Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3LS quoting ref: SIIW/4.

Closing date for receipt of completed applications is January 13, 1989.

The TUC is an equal opportunities employer and welcomes applications regardless of sex, religion, disability, marital status, ethnic origin or sexual orientation.

**Housing Advisory Service**

Our comprehensive Housing Advisory Service provides advice and help to clients who experience a wide range of housing problems.

The service currently comprises of 18 staff and is to be divided into 4 teams in anticipation of decentralisation of the Department.

**HOUSING ADVICE AND TENANCY RELATIONS OFFICER****£15,951 - £17,325 p.a. Ref: 658HD**

These team leaders each supervise a small team of staff, assist in the overall management and development of the Service and maintain a personal caseload of Tenancy Relations and other complex cases.

Closing date: 23.12.88.

**HOUSING ADVISORY OFFICER****Specially responsible for people with disabilities  
£12,912 - £13,707 p.a. Ref: 659HD**

The duties of this specialist post combines interviewing, advice and casework on behalf of clients with information, campaign and project work. Project work will include take-up of nomination rights, improving access to secure accommodation and increasing awareness of the needs of people with disabilities. Applications are particularly welcomed for this post from people who have direct life experience of dealing with the problems faced by people with disabilities.

Closing date: 21.1.89.

**HOUSING ADVISORY OFFICER****£11,721 - £12,453 p.a. Ref: 660HD**

These posts undertake interviewing, casework and liaison work and each develops a specialist area of interest. The problems dealt with include assessment of homelessness applications, provision of advice and assistance, private sector landlord/tenant problems and Housing Register enquiries.

Closing date: 23.12.88.

Application forms obtainable from the Director of Personnel, Ealing Civic Centre, 14-16 Uxbridge Road, London W5 2HL. Tel: 01-840 1995. Please quote appropriate reference.

Ealing's Council welcomes applications from all regardless of sex, race, ethnic origin, responsibility for dependants, from people with disabilities and from lesbians and gay men.

**Ealing**

**Disability Access Adviser**

**PO1/2, £14,334-£16,254 inclusive**

**HOUNSLAW IS COMMITTED TO A BARRIER FREE ENVIRONMENT**

This new post, based in Hounslow's busy Planning Department requires someone who will increase general disability awareness, provide practical and detailed advice to professional planners and assist in removing the barriers, physical and attitudinal, that prevent normal easy access to people with different disabilities. You will also advise the Council's architects and engineers.

**YOU WILL HAVE:**

- direct experience of physical and/or sensory disability
- an understanding of how to initiate access projects
- knowledge of statutory obligations in relation to access to public buildings
- an ability to identify access needs in planning applications
- an ability to ensure that senior managers are fully aware of the needs, rights and wishes of people with disabilities
- the skills to develop Council-wide policies to ensure accessible and user-friendly buildings and street environments

**IN RETURN, WE OFFER:**

- a working environment committed to the practical realisation of equal opportunities
- a competitive salary
- excellent facilities in a modern Civic Centre
- subsidised restaurant
- flexible working hours
- car user allowance and car loan facilities

We urge suitably experienced people with disabilities to apply for this post.

For an application form telephone 01-577 3136 (direct line) quoting Ref: PL/35/21 or write to the Planning Department, Civic Centre, Lampton Road, Hounslow TW3 4DN. Closing date 20 January 1989.

Job Sharers Welcome

**Hounslow**  
An Equal Opportunity Employer

vacancy bulletin which contains details of all jobs available and how to apply.

Hackney is serious about Equal Opportunities. All applications for jobs are considered on merit, with equal opportunities for women, black and ethnic minorities, lesbians and gay men and people with disabilities. Job share applications are welcomed with or without a partner.

Drop into our job shop at the Town Hall and look around or return the coupon, to: The Recruitment Office, Town Hall, Mare Street, London E8 1EA or telephone 01-986 3123 ext 211 or 215.

Please send me your weekly vacancy bulletin

Name.....

Address.....

Ref: DN.

**cut it out!**



**HACKNEY COUNCIL**  
Working for local people

**'OPEN ACCESS' TO JOBS**

As the largest City Council in the country and by far the biggest employer in Birmingham, we employ over 50,000 people, and regularly have a number of vacancies of all types and at all levels - manual, craft, office, technical and managerial.

The present make-up of our workforce does not reflect the community it serves. In order to help us change this, we particularly welcome more job applications from women and men with disabilities, who are under-represented in many areas of work.

Interested? ... then make sure you see our weekly Jobs Bulletin which lists all of our current vacancies. It can be seen at all Job Centres and Neighbourhood Offices in Birmingham. Selected vacancies also appear in every Thursday's Birmingham Evening Mail. If you live outside the City, you can obtain this week's Jobs Bulletin by phoning 021-235 3852 during office hours.

**Birmingham City Council**

The City Council welcomes applications from all sections of the community, irrespective of race, colour, gender, sexuality or disability.

Job Sharers welcome.

## P & O lift ban on deaf passengers

Cruise company, P&O, have lifted a ban on deaf people travelling alone after pressure from the British Deaf Association.

The BDA was alerted to the ban by the case of Mrs Verna Mitchell, 66, from Birmingham.

Mrs Mitchell, who is deaf, booked a 2-week Mediterranean cruise last summer to help her recover from her husband's death.

The travel agent told her P&O would not accept responsibility for informing her in an emergency that alarm bells were ringing and so would not take her.

After several letters over four months from BDA General

Secretary Arthur Verney, telling P&O about inexpensive devices which give off a visual or tactile signal, the company reviewed its policy and ordered the alarm devices for use by deaf passengers.

Dr John Evans, P&O's Fleet Medical Officer, said he still felt deaf people should, wherever possible, be accompanied by "a person of normal hearing".

The BDA said it welcomes the decision, however grudging, to end discrimination against people on the grounds of deafness.

It came too late for Mrs Mitchell to take the P&O cruise of her choice - so she went with another company.

**Mislaid your DN invoice?  
New reader?  
Please use this form.**

(Quote reference number from label if possible)

## Disability Now

is the paper for news, views, arts, sports, fashion, jobs, equipment and sharing problems.

Order yours now!

### DISABILITY NOW ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

Please return this form to Disability Now, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ with your remittance made payable to THE SPASTICS SOCIETY.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ (BLOCK LETTERS PLEASE)

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Disability and/or profession \_\_\_\_\_

Please tick  Individual £6  Organisation £10

Overseas £10 (Sterling)

I/We enclose  Cheque/P.O.  Bankers Order (see below)

A donation towards costs £ \_\_\_\_\_

I authorise you to charge my  VISA  ACCESS

Account No. \_\_\_\_\_

Expiry Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

### BANKERS ORDER

Return to Disability Now, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ, not to your Bank.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Your Bank Account No. \_\_\_\_\_ Sort Code \_\_\_\_\_

To the Manager \_\_\_\_\_ (Your Bank)

at \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Please pay to the account of The Spastics Society (12729280) National Westminster Bank Plc, Euston Centre Branch (60:50:03) London NW1 3BA the sum of £ \_\_\_\_\_ ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) Amount in words \_\_\_\_\_

on \_\_\_\_\_ 198 \_\_\_\_\_ and thereafter on the same day each year until further notice.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Please ensure that all parts of the form are completed and any alterations initialled. Disability Now is a non-profit publication. Receipts on request. Sorry, no refunds.

FOR BANK USE ONLY  
QUOTE REF.  
DN



Editor Josie Cichockyj and assistant Giles Hirst during happier times at *Athletic Challenge*

HUDDERSFIELD EXAMINER

## Disabled athletes mag "close to folding"

Britain's only glossy magazine for athletes who are disabled, *Athletic Challenge*, is facing collapse unless it can find more subscribers.

The magazine, which started last August and comes out six times a year, is the brainchild of Josie Cichockyj, a basketball competitor in the last two Paralympics.

She has spina bifida and is in a wheelchair.

She got £1,000 from the Prince's Trust to start *Athletic Challenge* and put in £2,500 of her own savings.

"Athletes who just happen to have a disability don't get media coverage although we put in just as much effort as other athletes. *Athletic Challenge* aims to show the true meaning of the words 'Sport for All'" she says.

Despite a lack of interest from

publishers, Josie says the response from athletes has been great. "My problem is that I couldn't afford to advertise widely, so not enough people know about it. We are very close to folding and basically have to get some cash in."

She believes that in the light of the present review aimed at improving the image of sport for disabled athletes, the end of the magazine would be very much a step backwards.

The printers have agreed to put one more issue out if there is a demand. The cover price is £1.60 or a year's subscription is £7.80. The magazine also needs local agents, who will get commission on all sales.

*Athletic Challenge*, Freepost, Unit 28, Gatehouse Enterprise Centre, Albert Street, Lockwood, Huddersfield.

## Disability Now

Published by The Spastics Society, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ.

Tel: 01-636 5020.

**Editor** Mary Wilkinson

**Reporters** Geraldine Holden

David Nicholson

**Editorial Secretary**

Alison Eastgate

**Circulation** Gayle Mooney

**Advertising** Jonathan Wine, Kingslea Press Ltd.,

12 Dock Offices, Surrey

Quays, Lower Road, London

SE16 2XL. Tel: 01-252

1362.

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Street, London SE1.

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Group plc, Bicester, Oxon.

The views expressed in *Disability Now* are not necessarily those of The Spastics Society.

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## Which wheelchair? Consumer guide coming

The biggest research project yet into the design of wheelchairs is to be carried out by the Research Institute for Consumer Affairs (RICA), sister to the Consumers' Association.

RICA says there are glaring faults in the design of many powered wheelchairs which make their users' lives a misery.

Yet there is little independent advice available and no truly comparative tests have been done to give buyers an informed choice.

Secretary of the British Association of Wheelchair Distributors, Dudley Smytheman, said it was true no comparative tests had been done but disagreed that no independent advice was available.

"There are centres around the country, starting with the Disabled Living Foundation in London, which can give advice, as can distributors who are members of our association."

The first stage of RICA's project will be a survey of wheelchair users: their differing needs; the types of vehicles in use; how people find the money to pay for them; the advice on offer and the standard of reliability and repairs.

Then user tests will be carried out at Banstead Mobility Centre in Surrey.

The researchers hope to recruit 100 people with arthritis, cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis or who have had strokes - the main users of wheelchairs - to try out a selection of buggies, scooters and wheelchairs.

Laboratory tests will also be done to rate each wheelchair on, for example, how it copes with different weights and extremes of temperature.

RICA hopes to publish its findings in 1990 as a consumer guide and a manual for professional staff prescribing chairs.

## shape London



The London Disability Arts Forum in collaboration with SHAPE London, is seeking a

### FESTIVAL CO-ORDINATOR

to ensure the smooth running of the first London-wide Disability Arts Festival, due to take place late July 1989.

The Co-ordinator will be heavily involved in all aspects of the planning of the Festival, and will take a leading role in the programming of the event.

Substantial support will be available from both the SHAPE London and the L.D.A.F. staff in the preparation for and during the Festival.

Fee is negotiable, according to experience.

We are actively seeking a Disabled person for this post, the terms and conditions of the post to a large extent can be negotiated with the successful applicant.

For further information and a Job Description please contact

**The London Disability Arts Forum,**

c/o Artsline,

5 Crowndale Road,

London NW1 1TU.

Telephone 01-383 4479.

Deadline for applications 21st Jan. 89

Both SHAPE and the London Disability Arts Forum are equal opportunities employers.

The work environment will be fully accessible.